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THE MANAGEMENT
OF
YOUNG CHILDREN

BY WILLIAM E. BLATZ AND HELEN BOTT

PARENTS AND THE PRE-SCHOOL CHILD
THE MANAGEMENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN

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OF
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BY

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AND

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1930

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PREFACE

We have a custom in training leaders in parent education of calling on each student to comment critically on her own performance before others proceed to pass judgment on it. A preface would seem designed to offer the same indulgence to authors.

For the social emphasis of this book we make no apology. The most important task which children have to learn is to live with others on a basis of mutual satisfaction. Both the "give" and "take" of social life must be adequately provided for, extremes in either direction yielding a social product unsatisfactory either to the group or to the individual or to both. The most important task which parents have to perform is that of directing their children towards an ideal balance between those two tendencies. The task of the educator of parents is to develop ways of making the parental duty not only efficient but pleasant.

Upon this problem of the socializing of the young child our aim in these pages is to present what might be termed a philosophy of child training rather than a scientific treatise. We have endeavored to outline what we consider the underlying principles of the child-parent relationship rather than to present detailed results of experimental work or systematized observations with children. This is largely because of the dearth of scientific studies with children, particularly of studies designed to bear directly upon the issues that parents actually encounter. Child Study is still a young science, and while its easier and more obvious aspects have been fairly well charted the more complicated questions of social relations, the development of personality, etc., are only beginning to be approached in any thoroughgoing fashion. Meanwhile parents are living in the midst of situations which can ill afford to wait till authoritative pronouncements are available for their solution. Can something useful be done in the meantime from such data as are at hand?

Two misconceptions in the popular attitude to child training deserve attention. The first is the doctrine that it is possible to produce a perfect child, perfect, that is, in the sense of morals and conduct. Not infrequently one hears parents boasting more or less complacently that their children have never lied, stolen, used profanity, and so forth. There is reason to believe that these traits, unfortunately named as they are, appear to some degree almost universally in the socially developing child. It would be more fitting, we believe, if these aspects of the child's attempts at adjusting to our complicated scheme of social conventions could be considered as "mistakes" with attention directed towards their eradication by an educative process rather than as signs of moral obloquy to be treated punitively.

The second misconception follows directly from the first, namely, that the training of children must consist largely in the careful scrutiny of the child's life in order to detect symptoms of maladjustment which are to be treated symptomatically, each by its proper and specific formula. Evidence of this conception is seen in the frequency of such questions as: "What shall I do when my child is disobedient?" "What shall I do when my child refuses to play with other children?" This might be called the "patent medicine" scheme of child training.

It seems as unpractical as it is undesirable to lay down specific formulas for dealing with such problems. This is the time-honored method of government by maxims. Experience with parents convinces one of the futility of dealing with difficulties by the prescription method—it only encourages the dependence of the parent on outside opinion instead of stimulating his individual judgment, resourcefulness and initiative. Such a system requires to be replaced by a conception of child training which is more truly educative for both parent and child. This book attempts to weave together on this pattern a number of topics of practical interest to parents. The point of view may be stated briefly as follows: "How can I as a parent manage my children so that they will learn how best to live with others?"

Although adequate answers to this question can be found only through extended investigations, we are venturing tentative answers, not in a spirit of dogmatism, but rather as a rough scaffolding looking towards a more permanent structure. These proposals may serve as a guide in the exigencies of home situations and also be suggestive to investigators who are contemplating more intensive studies.

Our treatment of these subjects may have fallen between the two stools of the too abstract and the too concrete. It has been necessary to invite the reader to examine with us a number of abstract topics, freedom, authority, social control, etc. In this we have tried to avoid the technical vocabulary of philosophical debate and to keep on the homely level of everyday experience and language. These basic ideas could not well be evaded, because they are involved in an understanding of social phenomena at whatever level, of the home or of the state. Our object, however, is not to theorize, but rather to join hands with those parents who really desire to think through the concrete issues which their children present.

Lastly, we have assumed throughout that *learning* is the most significant of all functions in the developing child. And because learning is continuous, parental responsibility should be focused not so much on vagaries of human conduct, a negative outlook, but rather upon a constructive program of training which begins at birth, anticipates difficulties in the child's path, expects a number of mistakes, but refrains from emphasizing these, concentrating rather on providing educative experience for the child.

This would call for a presentation in terms of constructive measures but we realize how often our treatment here falls short. In particular our illustrations from group discussions picture parental difficulties and mistakes rather than the successful handling of children. The latter would perhaps be the more instructive, but the former is a stage through which one must live and reflect before he is ready for more constructive thinking and acting. This, moreover, may be true not only of the individual parent but of the parent education movement in general. Dealing with the obvious difficulties in our path is a necessary phase before we can free ourselves for the exploration of new forms of more creative experience. But however slow the process, parent education groups do clear the way for more constructive attitudes. May we hope that the next decade will bring a fresh accent in our thinking wherein positive procedures of cultural value will find foremost expression.

The arrangement of this book resembles that of *Parents and the Pre-School Child,* but the content is different. Being again designed as a text for study groups, an outline of the topic, illustrations from group discussions, and in some instances a clinical case history, are appended to each chapter. An annotated bibliography classified according to chapter topics and a general index are included. In content the present work stresses principles of social adjustment in the pre-school period rather than simply the establishment of desirable habits in the control of the appetites and emotions. In a few places it seemed necessary to recapitulate points already covered in the earlier work in order to make the presentation more complete.

Certain of the chapters are more theoretical in character than others, and these may be passed over or dealt with in a different order as the interest of readers may require. While there is a sequence of thought running throughout the work, we have tried to make each chapter a unit which might be read independently of the others.

We wish to express our thanks to the Merrill-Palmer School for lending us an unpublished manuscript on motor activities; to Professor Paul J. Kruse of Cornell University for calling our attention to the book by Jacob Abbott to which we have frequently referred; to Lily F. Johnson for help in the preparation of the bibliography; to other members of our staff and to students in parent education for work on the bibliography and illustrations; and in particular to Professor E. A. Bott for reading the manuscript and for his advice and criticisms.

St. George's School for Child Study,
University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada.
July, 1930.

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FOREWORD

The authority of the parent is of diminishing force, along with the authority of all groups that derive from status. The immediate effect, in the case of a given parent or family, is disconcerting in the extreme, for in addition to the demoralization of "discipline" is the embarrassment of having to *acknowledge* ignorance or confusion. Kings and generals have their counsels and staff advisers; to whom is the parent to turn in moments of stress? The very fact of calling for help is an admission of failure, a further weakening of the slipping authority.

In recent years there has been a fortunate reversal of this attitude, and books like this one by William E. Blatz and Helen Bott have contributed both to making parents more ready to accept the guidance of specialists and to informing parents along the lines of better understanding of their children and of their relations to their children. Parents need no longer apologize for seeking help. It is only the grossly ignorant who to-day assume that instinct or nature in some mysterious way equips the individual adequately to meet the duties of each new period in life, or who are content with what was good enough for earlier generations in utter disregard of the accumulated knowledge of a scientific age, as well as of completely changed living conditions. And it is only those who are satisfied to remain permanently guided by the dangerous knowledge of a completed education who will accept as always and everywhere valid the averages and generalizations and rules, while the rest of the world is learning to recognize and to value the individual person, the individual child, as the central object of concern and effort.

The Management of Young Children can be confidently recommended to parents because it is at the same time sound in theory and well calculated to help in daily living with children. It does what the title promises, and it does much more than that. The authors take a broad view of what is involved in "management," recognizing that the parent who is to get the benefit of the study and experience summarized and elucidated in this book must learn to manage him- or herself, and not merely the child as an external entity, much as one manages an automatic refrigerator. They point the way indeed to the effective guidance of young children, but largely in terms of directing the relationship between the child and his environment, including the parents and other human beings.

The increasing reliance upon scientific findings in the management of practical affairs carries with it a certain danger, namely that of mechanizing procedures, of standardizing our treatment of children. This danger is admirably anticipated by the authors of the present book. They undertake from the very first to make the reader realize the distinction between a formula and a philosophy, between a rule and a principle. There seems to be a special need for a clear and convincing development of this point to-day, when the glorification of science has served in many quarters to discredit "philosophy" as something vague, futile, impractical; and when the admirably precise and specific formulations of science, combined with our frequently pathetic need for help, make us look to the formula as the last word of wisdom. The book relates its eminently practical advice to a larger view of life, as humans live it to-day in a complex society.

Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg.

New York, 1930.

CHAPTER I

AUTHORITY IN THE MODERN HOME

> "The old authorities, it seemed clear, were gone. The family, which had gained its authority through its economic dominance, was now losing its influence. Ecclesiasticism was also passing along with the whole theory of the divine right of minorities or majorities to tell us what to think. The truth, it was evident, no longer came from authority, but authority came only from the truth." *

The status of parental authority is a burning question in many homes to-day. Probably in every study group of parents the question which first emerges is, How shall I teach my child to obey? This insistence often means that obedience is to be an end in itself whereas it only indicates that a change of outlook has come about wherein parents are less certain about what to do. When parents are sure of themselves they are likely to receive the allegiance which they expect from young children; it is their own uncertainties which engender unreadiness, and even defiance in their children. It is, therefore, to the causes of uncertainty in parents rather than to the lack of compliance in children that we must first look if we are to get fresh light on the problem of authority in the home.

Why Are Parents Unsure?

A generation ago the authority of parents over their children was, in theory at least, unquestioned. This authority rested on certain widely approved techniques of child-training: Spare the rod and spoil the child, Children should be seen but not heard, and other maxims less epigrammatic but equally emphatic in assuming the inherent rightness and wisdom of the parent in his handling of the child. In exchange for this definiteness and conviction of government by maxim we have now, as Porter Lee recently remarked in a public address, a generation of parents who are in search of techniques of child-training, and whose one maxim is: "We must all be as flexible as we can."

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* From Edward A. Filene's discussion of what he, as a practical man, finds science has been doing to human affairs. *Science*, April 18, 1930, p. 404.

To explain this change in attitude and practice, this shift from certainty to questioning, we must look, not to the home alone, but to certain changes which have taken place in all our ways of thinking and acting within the last three or four decades. Those of us whose childhood dates back into the nineteenth century can remember a world in which the forces of tradition though diminishing, still largely ruled, in which the inherent rightness of one's inherited church, politics, social and business life, was accepted with little scrutiny. Many forces have conspired to destroy this unquestioned stability and uniformity of life,—the Great War, the applications of physical science to industry and the conveniences of living, to mention only two which have speeded up this change. The fact now is that we have emerged into a new world in which values are less taken on trust than submitted to the acid test of experience.

Of course, any such general statement is bound to be untrue in many cases; it can describe only trends, not universal attitudes. Thus when one notes the readiness with which supposedly intelligent people still are prone to believe things just because they read them in a book—on child study, for example—or the eagerness with which they seek for short-cuts to progress, such as a formula for the training of their children, or a synthesized food that will guarantee perfect growth and health, one realizes that the age of maxims which can be passively accepted is not so far behind. Indeed, that some people never outgrow it.

Prescriptions or Principles.

One can discover, however, a growing tendency on the part of thoughtful people to rely less and less on what they are told, and more and more on what their own experience tells them, or, to put it in another way, people are slowly becoming more discriminating in the allegiance they give to different voices which claim to be authoritative. The emphasis of a scientific age on verification of likely guesses by the test of observation and experiment is slowly transforming our temper of mind,—"I come from Missouri," "Tell it to your aunt," are crude but significant expressions of a perfectly healthy skepticism in relation to the surface values of life as we meet them.

That the shift from a traditional to an experimental attitude to life can hardly be made without dislocation and pain is probably truer of the home than of any other organization. Most of us as parents started out with the unquestioning acceptance of many of the techniques bequeathed to us by our own parents. For example, many conscientious and intelligent parents have felt that, at a certain age when their child showed resistance to something which had to be done, it was their *duty* to whip him. When, perhaps, the look of hurt bewilderment in the child's face made the mother realize how little the punishment had been understood in relation to the fault it was meant to correct, she may have found herself questioning the rightness of a procedure which before she had accepted. And because she questioned, or because some one else questioned her, her confidence in the old techniques was undermined and she was left unsure of what to do. 2 She had lost a prescription and had not yet found a principle. Thus many people in family life, as in other spheres such as religion, politics, social ethics, breaking away from the old moorings, have found themselves without any way of steering a straight course. The old authority was gone, but a new authority had to be found to take its place. A period of anarchy or misrule may intervene while people are groping for new principles of regulation and control. While this is a commonplace in social history, and hence not a unique circumstance in our generation, it nevertheless is a unique situation for us who have to live it through.

Parents in a Changing World.

Thus, as we look at the world to-day, we find on every hand evidences of a certain break-up of the old social order, and the struggles of a new world to be born. *Middletown,** a book which has arrested the attention of many thoughtful readers, makes explicit this contrast by comparing the life of a middle western city in the United States of to-day with what it was thirty-five years ago. Such a contrast emphasizes two outstanding features of present-day life, standardization and change. It is worth while to scrutinize these somewhat closely in order to understand the situation in which not a few of us are living.

"We live in a world of transition" was probably the original cliché uttered by our first parents as they left Eden, and invoked ever since to explain the anomalous in our social experience. What is peculiar in the present day is that the *rate of change* has been greatly accelerated. This has come about through the applications of modern invention to industry, to motor and air transport and to long-distance communication. The result has been a speeding up of the tempo of living to a degree never dreamed of before. Contrast the age of walking, of carriages, of the horse street-car with the present. And the new régime is not less pertinent to our rural life than our urban communities; its influences radiate to our farthest frontiers. The change is more than a physical one, it strikes deep into our habits of thinking and feeling. People's thoughts are adapted to their mode of locomotion; neither Wordsworth nor Robert Service could so readily have conceived their types of poetry in an age of motor cars.

This emphasis on new forms makes the old increasingly irrelevant, and nowhere is this shown more clearly than in the sphere of family relationships. The sort of behavior which was adapted to the walking age is no longer suited to a generation where change is the main emphasis. Yet people adapt at unequal rates to new conditions. For example, as the writers of *Middletown* point out, the motor car is accepted without question when it is used for the delivery of groceries, or for transport to and from work, but when it becomes a question of Sunday driving, or the young people going off evenings in the car, the matter takes on the complexion of an acute social problem.

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* Lynd, Robert S. and Helen Merrell, Middletown, New York. Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1929.

Because the world in which we live to-day is so different from the world in which we were brought up, we find difficulty in bringing our practice as parents up to date. Because there are no deeply channeled traditions to guide us we are compelled to use our own judgment to a degree never required before. The inadequacy of old standards to measure new situations leaves many people feeling uncertain and baffled. Conflict arises between the old and the new. The adult is apt to cling to tested and tried ways, whereas the child, who has nothing to unlearn, has the advantage of adapting readily to the new, unaware as he yet is of the pitfalls which it may contain. The result is conflict, both within the one individual and between different generations in the home.

It therefore appears that parental uncertainties are not so much something for which as parents we should be reproached as one result of a world whirling round so fast that we are all suffering from vertigo. The methods of meeting difficulty which were appropriate to a simpler, more static society are no longer adequate for our changing world, and we have not yet succeeded in finding new ways for new situations. Porter Lee's formulation of the new maxim of flexibility is therefore not so silly as it at first sounds; it reflects the need of the situation, at least to the extent that in a changing environment flexibility or ease of adaptation is a necessary condition of survival.

The Lock-step of Modern Life.

Closely related to change in social life to-day is the tendency to *standardization*. Improved methods of communication, mass production, and the development of advertising on a nation-wide scale tend towards a uniformity in dress, manners, and modes of thought. This applies not only to different localities but to different classes as well. Main Street is becoming Broadway, and, in appearance at least, Susie O'Grady and the Colonel's lady are as like as two pins. Dr. Root has piquantly expressed this uniformity of modern life: *

> "Standardized usages, standardized tests, standardized curriculums, standardized reading lists for every grade, standardized styles, standardized interests, standardized current thought . . . highly standardized and synchronized manias of all sorts—the best seller, everybody drive a car nowhere furiously and return, everybody play golf, everybody solve cross-word puzzles, everybody play bridge, everybody eat Alaska, everybody put on stiff straw hats exactly alike at exactly the same time and discard them on the appointed day regardless of weather or dictates of comfort or utility, everybody sing the one song that has attained the most sublime vacuity in intellectual, esthetic, and emotional expression, with millions of radios, pianos, and victrolas belching it in discordant and non-synchronized unison, everybody saying, 'I'm gypped' at least sixty times a day, everybody play mah jong, everybody see 'Abie's Irish Rose' and so on."

This is four years old. Bring the slang, the games and the plays up to date and it still describes us admirably to-day. But uniformity tends inevitably to boredom. Because we are all doing the same things, we must change the *fashion* of our doings as quickly as possible. Thus, to give a slight but significant example, in the days of our grandmothers, when there was more latitude in the choice of clothes, women were content to wear the same dress for years; nowadays, when every one wears the same styles we must change them as quickly as possible in an effort to outrun the prevailing uniformity. Thus standardization and change augment one another in a vicious circle, and we plunge on in the new national game of Keeping Up with the Joneses.

Another reaction against standardization expresses itself, paradoxically, in the premium which is put on originality in the sense of anything which can furnish us with a new thrill, providing relief from the inevitable ennui of sameness. This receptiveness to whatever is *new* in thought and action often leads us in the train of the bizarre, and may put us at the mercy of quacks and charlatans. It has, on the other hand, the merit of making us receptive, even if somewhat uncritical of new ideas. It is the antidote which society is trying to develop, unconsciously as it were, against its own poisons. We recognize these contemporary tendencies towards standardization and although we may protest we usually conform. In any event, we face the issue of having to live in the sort of society that has been sketched. What is the moral of how best to adjust to it?

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* W. T. Root, in his chapter, "The Individual in the Group," of the symposium, *Concerning Parents* (New York, New Republic, Inc., 1926), pp. 177-8.

In attempting to regulate ourselves and our families in the kind of environment indicated there are two considerations which may be helpful. The first is concerned with the futility of *standards* in a world of change. The easy way to settle a question of practical ethics is to have a fixed rule and apply it in every case, regardless of individual variations or circumstances. This plan is least dangerous in a society which is relatively static, indeed, it is in civilizations which change little, such as the classical Chinese society, that manners are most rigidly and completely determined. Here a satisfactory working rule of conduct, once it has been discovered, continues applicable over a long period of time. But with shifting values simple formulas become inappropriate. New situations are constantly appearing to which old rules do not apply. For instance, it was relatively easy to keep Sunday as a day of rest in the days of relative immobility; it has become practically impossible to-day because even the family which stays at home is subject to a friendly invasion from without. Therefore, a rigid rule, no Sunday visiting, becomes inadequate, and the whole question must be reviewed in a larger way; by asking, for example: What is the best use which can be made of Sunday for my family, my friends and myself?

Philosophies versus Formulas.

It will be seen that this last question involves a much greater degree of intelligence, courage, and social skill than does the application of a formula. It implies a willingness to scrutinize, and, if necessary, to revise our practice in the light of a larger evaluation in order to discover the kind of behavior which best fits a given situation. The example given lies somewhat outside the field of child study and is one which for many people has ceased to have any emotional connotation; it was chosen for that reason. But it would be possible with all of us to bring the matter much nearer home. Our present concern is in the field of child-parent relationships, and our purpose throughout this book will be to illustrate how problems of child management can be approached from the point of view of the evolving of a philosophy of social ends and means of attaining them rather than of the application of particular formulas.

This aim implies a profound difference in *method:* it must be educational in outlook rather than authoritative; it must also be experimental and critical rather than conventional and complacent. This demands that instead of taking cut and dried rules from some authority and endorsing their wholesale application, we must in the midst of our particular difficulties try to discover a way of thinking and acting which will lead us out and forward. This does not mean, however, that each circumstance must stand in isolation, for common elements should be looked for and will be found showing that there *are* uniformities in practice and results. In so far as these can be generalized they will afford us principles for the guidance of conduct, but their adequacy must rest on experience not on tradition. Such a philosophy will not dispense with rules but its rules must be grounded in demonstrable facts and be in plumb with the realities of current life.

This change of attitude away from too great dependence upon tradition and formulas towards an alert willingness to learn from experience is not one which any of us can effect overnight. The mere fact of belonging to a child study group, for instance, will not work such a transformation; it depends rather on a long process of education and conscious effort continued over a period of years. And particularly is this the case in the sphere of parenthood where the problems continually change with the years. It is only when the parent who participates in such a discipline looks back that he or she is aware of how far they have traveled. But slow and painful as the process may seem it has its compensations in the increasing confidence which it gives in the quest for a method of dealing with difficulties. Matthew Arnold, it is true, rated as Second Best the person,

> Who through all he meets can steer him,
> Can reject what cannot clear him:

Yet no characteristic seems more desirable at the present than just this ability to discriminate, to find and use principles as guides to action.

Resisting Social Pressure.

It will be evident that if people can train themselves to seek and follow principles instead of merely applying ready-made rules, they are thereby arming themselves against those social pressures which make for deadening conformity and standardization of behavior. The need of cultivating such resistance to group pressure on behalf of our children is emphasized by Dr. Root: *

> "But there are some unfavorable aspects of the socializing of the individual. Social suggestion is a tremendous stimulus but it is quite as often a poison as a food. Mob intimidations of all sorts lead to social imitations, against the better judgment, to the detriment of the individual and to the ultimate damage of the group. Keeping up with the Joneses, gangs, styles, fear of social criticism, school spirit, fads, all such, coerce and deprive the individual within the group of the independent judgment necessary to preserve personal integrity, without his knowing the cause of coercion. For administrative ease, much time is spent in schools getting group spirit;

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* *Concerning Parents,* pp. 180-181.

little time is spent in creating resistance to group spirit. School spirit and athletics are good within bounds; dangerous when all perspective is lost. Individual judgment is likely to perish before propaganda and mob suggestion. Education has failed which does not train to resist either overt mental intimidation, or the unconscious yielding to group dictation. Closely related is the inane acquiescence to whatever is vogue; expressed in 'Boost! Don't be a knocker!'"

To expect children to resist social pressure if the family life is strongly set in the conventional molds of the community is, of course, a manifest absurdity. Only when discriminating criticism of social customs obtains within the home can one hope for a like attitude in children.

By preserving one's sympathetic rapport with the social group to which one belongs, while at the same time refusing to be hypnotized by its accepted values, one brings to bear on the practices of the group that kind of evaluation and constructive criticism which alone guarantees social progress. This calls for a high degree of inventiveness and skill. It can be done effectively only on the basis of thinking through problems in the way we have been trying to suggest. For example, a mother belongs to a study group in which the question of sex education of children has been thoroughly discussed. In the light of this preparation she answers her child's questions to the best of her ability. But her child communicates some part of his new-found knowledge to the other children in the street, and, at once, all her neighbors are in a turmoil. What the mother will then do is the proof of the effectiveness of the training she has herself received. Has her own education cut deep enough to change her attitudes, not only to sex training of children, but to the emotional associations which the subject of sex has for many people? Is she able to understand and sympathize with an attitude which she herself may have but lately shared; or does her own advance in thinking only make her scornful and intolerant of those who do not share her views or follow her lead? In other words, has she been acquiring a philosophy, not only of sex, but of human relations in general, so that she is able to differ from her neighbors, to make clear to herself and to them *why* she differs, and still to preserve her own equanimity and, if possible, their trust and friendship? Or has only the surface of her thinking been scratched? Has she merely picked up a patter of phrases, or a new set of superficial ideas? If the latter, she has merely substituted a new authority for the old; she has changed the dictum which she accepts, but not the kind of authority which governs her acceptances. Only when she herself has reviewed the possibilities of a given situation, decided on a course of action as the most congruous, and then tested this course of action in practice has her attitude been changed in any fundamental and far-reaching sense. Only then has the authority of *tradition* been superseded by the authority of *experience.*

Parents and Children.

Up to this point we have been discussing authority in its more general aspects, but when we speak of authority in the home this suggests not only the larger question of the basis of authority, but the more definite and limited one of the authority of parents in relation to their children. To discuss this latter question we must try to see the child-parent relationship in a new light with the tarnish of familiarity rubbed off. It may help to make the relationship more graphic if we think of the parent's experience as represented by a large circle, and that of the child by a smaller one, lying within the circumference of the larger. This position represents fairly accurately the relation between parent and infant or young child, where the horizon of the offspring is largely bounded by that of the parent. The areas, however, are not coterminous, the life of the parent has a much wider range than that of the child—a fact which it is important to remember, as the suppression in the mother of these other interests in favor of the child-parent relationship impoverishes her own life and is likely to injure rather than to enrich that relationship itself.

Could our diagram be turned into a slow motion picture another vital aspect of the child-parent relationship could then be portrayed, that is, the gradual movement of the smaller circle out beyond the boundaries and fringe of the larger one till finally it has passed beyond the orbit though not beyond the radiating influence of the parent's life. Thus we might safeguard ourselves from the fallacy of speaking of the child-parent relationship as though it were a static instead of a constantly evolving adjustment. Indeed, in extremes we may find a reversal of the early rôle of dependence, so that as the child becomes an adult he assumes a position of dominance and the parent becomes psychologically dependent on the child with corresponding complications for both growing out of carry-overs from their earlier reversed relation.

Our immediate interest lies, however, in the early chapters of the story, at the time when the child's interests are still largely ruled by his parents, but at the point when he is just beginning to come within the sphere of influence of the larger family group and also of the world outside. What sort of relationship between the young child and his parents is most conducive to good adjustment at this stage, and also as a prelude to good relations in the larger sphere of social life?

Parent Education: Child-centered or Parent-centered?

Most of us who join a parent group do so in the hope of gleaning information or guidance in the better management of our children from day to day or for help upon some more pressing difficulties. The setting is thus child-centered and the discussion consequently reflects this. While children thus easily serve as a medium for our exchange of ideas and views, it will be apparent from our foregoing comments upon attitudes that the subject cannot remain at that level if the parent is to realize the vital importance of her own personality and that of other adults in this relationship. If as a parent we pause to take stock of ourselves, to ask whether we have any clearly formulated conception of what an ideal parent should be and how far we measure up to this standard, do we not find that it is much easier to appraise our children than ourselves? And even if we have in mind a model of parenthood, are we clearly aware of how we came by it and how far it truly serves us and the children in our charge?

Many persons to-day seem to believe that these things come naturally to young persons. "The place of the woman is in the home," says the man of public affairs, and he is no doubt honestly convinced that if only she could be kept there, all would be well. But can we assume that the principles of good parenthood are so simply arrived at? Success in other enterprises requires more or less self-education for the task and our success as a parent is likewise a personal responsibility that will bear frequent appraisal and reconstruction.

In approaching the question of parents and children the interests and values involved point in both directions and hence neither can be neglected without loss to the whole. Referring now to the parents, what attitudes towards children directly affect authority in the home?

Dominance or Leadership.

It is impossible to raise this question without at once challenging the philosophy of parenthood which is implicit with every parent. Do we think of our children as appendages to our own personalities whom we wish to keep in a relation of dependence? Ibsen puts the extreme expression of this wish in the mouth of one of the characters in his play, *The Pretenders:*

> "I must have some one by me who sinks his own will utterly in mine, who believes in me unflinchingly, who will cling to me in good hap and ill, who lives only to shed light and warmth over my life and must die if I fail."
>
> "Buy yourself a dog, my Lord."

Most of us are revolted by this extreme expression of the dominance motif, but a rigid searching of heart may discover more than we like to admit of it in our own composition. On the other hand, even while realizing the difficulty of being honest with ourselves and of overcoming a certain innate selfishness which makes us see our children as projections of our own personalities, we may resolve to forgo the satisfactions of having them dependent in the hope that we may some day help our children to realize their full status of adulthood.

Parental authority will take its complexion largely from our attitude upon this question of the ultimate dependence or independence of the child. If we *like* to have our children dependent on us, if our aim is to regulate their interests, their choices, their friends, so that we keep the little circle firmly moored within the large, then naturally the negative virtues of docility, compliance, passive obedience, are the only ones which we will emphasize. If, on the other hand, we accept from the beginning that the independence of a self-governing personality is the goal of our endeavors in child-training, our efforts will be directed from the beginning towards a gradual realization of that independence. The word *gradual* is here important. The continuum of life proceeds as a whole, each stage molding the next. Thus a child in whom during the early years the above negative virtues have been studiously cultivated, when he is sent away to school, or when he is twenty-one years old, or when *she* marries, is expected suddenly to exhibit other virtues essential for the responsibilities of adult life. The painful dislocation which such a demand involves for both child and parent should be sufficient argument against this policy of emancipation by abrupt transition. But in addition the child may find it difficult to use freedom wisely when it is finally given, either remaining dependent, or going to the opposite extreme of license.

Probably much of the nervousness of parents in face of the so-called revolt of youth is due to the failure to make emancipation gradual. Parents are hurt, bewildered and frightened when their offspring take the reins in their own hands; and the children, if they have not been trained in the use of freedom are likely to abuse the liberties which they have had to snatch by force. It would seem obvious that the moral from this is not the tightening up of the old-fashioned forms of authority, neither is it the complete relinquishment of control by parents. Rather we must seriously face the problem of devising an educational process which will gradually train the young in the proper use of privilege.

Two Kinds of Authority.

The conception of authority held by persons responsible for the control of others is often revealed by the cast of their questions on this issue. Two contrasting forms of question are: How can I get people to do what I want? and How can I direct and train people so that they will come to accept full responsibility for their behavior? The parent who thinks in terms of the persisting dependence of his children is likely to employ the first form which expresses his search for methods of *enforcing* authority. If, however, one accepts as a goal the ultimate independence of the child, the second is the preferred form which implies the need of emancipation.

The parent who insists on having central in her scheme what she herself elects can only develop the kind of authority that is based on *constraint.* It need not be that the mother is selfish in a personal sense but simply that she permits only what *she* thinks good for the child—upon the formula, Mother Knows Best. The result is the same and is inevitable, as the impulses of the child are bound, sooner or later, to clash with what the parent believes to be best. She has then no option but to bring the child into line with her views by whatever methods she can make availing.

The Authority of Constraint.

Force is the commonest tool of the authority of constraint. The adult, by virtue of his strength and size alone, can impose his will on the young child in a purely physical way. This is the easy and lazy method of control, alike in families, communities or among the nations. But it has difficulties; rebellion is always lurking around the corner. Such rebellion has often been accepted by the parent as inevitable. This rationalization is calculated to save the parent's face during the years that such control can legally be exercised, whereas when the child is finally in a position to defy such control the parent can only regard him as one among other adults—free to steer his own course.

Probably there will always be some place, however small, for the use of arbitrary regulation, that is, of sheer physical compulsion to overcome resistance in a child. Thus the child who persistently annoys other children must be removed, no matter how he kicks and screams, until he comes to a more sociable frame of mind and can mingle with other children without objectionable interference. Similarly the individual whose behavior is a menace to society will have to be restrained at least temporarily, till he is able or willing to adopt more amenable ways. Among nations a technique for the regulation of insurgent members in the interests of the group is only now being evolved in place of the less rational appeal to force. But the occasions for arbitrary regulation are relatively rare in a scheme of authority based on education such as we purpose to present.

Rule by Love.

There is, however, a second kind of authority by constraint which is more commonly used than that of physical force, and which is more subtle and perhaps more damaging in its effects on the child. This is what is often described by parents as ruling by love. Here the intention is by appeals to the child's affection to bring his action into line with the parent's wishes. This seems to us the Unpardonable Sin in the sphere of family relationships. It does violence to the child's free feeling of love for the parent by turning it to some ulterior purpose. Such constraint cripples the child's capacity for independent action, and it must finally destroy the child-parent relationship, which can only be happy when free and spontaneous. This method of control is the more difficult to combat because it clothes itself in subtle forms. "Do this for mother's sake," "Don't do that if you want mother to love you," are crude expressions, but merely a look—or the withholding of a look—may convey to the child quite as effectively the same idea. Parents who habitually base their authority on the grounds of affection do well to remind themselves that this method carries its own nemesis. They are gambling with their most prized possession, the true affection of their children. It creates rebellion, overt or repressed, and the repression of rebellious impulses under the cloak of seeming compliance is likely to distort the personality of the child, and ultimately, as we have said, must destroy the relation with the parent.

The Authority of Education.

How may one discover the type of authority which emerges in answer to our second question, that is, in respect of training and equipping the child for the use of freedom? This may be described as the authority of *education,* using education in its original sense as a leading forth or drawing out of the capacities of the child, a development of his powers through use. It will be clear at once that in such a process the parent assumes the rôle of *guide* rather than of dictator. His primary function is to lead the child along the right way, not to pass judgment on him when he falls into the wrong.

What are the qualities which entitle us to act as guides to our children in their progressive initiation into the complexities of social living? In other words, what are the essentials of successful leadership?

It is impossible to answer with assurance at the present stage of our knowledge of social phenomena. In professional and public life there is the continual quest to *find* leaders, but what we most need through education is to *develop* leaders, and to remember that as parents the great majority of us must serve as leaders. Special studies of leadership at different age levels are needed, especially should the genesis of leadership trends among young children be studied both in the home and in the nursery school. Similarly, through parent groups it should be possible to get information about the kind of leadership which parents do afford their children, and to evaluate these according as they tend to promote independence or dependence in the children who are thus led. Pending such investigations we submit that leadership of the type we have described—that is, leadership which enlists the willing coöperation of the child in learning to govern himself—must rest largely on the adult's ability to regulate his own life. This consists mainly in his judgment in *making decisions,* and then in abiding by the consequences after they have been made. In other words, good self-government is the first qualification for the successful governing of others.

We shall have occasion to elaborate this idea in the next chapter, but we wish here to point out that such a view of leadership makes authority rest, not on age, nor strength, nor wealth, nor intelligence, but on practical ability to manage one's own affairs, to do those things which we are demanding of our children. There is nothing novel in this conception but it remains as true as when expressed for another purpose in Plato's *Republic.* The *prestige* which the adult can earn in the eyes of the child thus becomes the ground of his authority. Such prestige operates, not directly as a compulsive force, but indirectly as a *suggestion* by which the child is almost irresistibly influenced. If this is true, for example, *compelling* a child to do his school work should be a less efficient means of control than placing him in a situation where every one works, and where interest and diligence on his part are taken for granted. Again, exhorting him to tell the truth, or punishing him for lying, becomes less effective than bringing him up in a home where parents try to be honest with their children and with one another. Probably our difficulty lies less in accepting this view of authority than in putting it into practice. The authority of constraint demands little of us as individuals; the authority of prestige involves a radical reconstruction of ourselves so that we may realize to some degree in our own lives those things which we wish our children to become.

OUTLINE I

AUTHORITY IN THE MODERN HOME

I. Why are parents unsure of themselves?
  Changes in modern life—speed,
    —standardization.
  Meeting these changes—the futility of standards,
    —resisting social pressure.
  Substituting experience for tradition.

II. The Child-Parent Relationship:
  Overlapping areas of experience.
  The outward movement of the child's life.

III. Authority in the Home:
  Constraint—it keeps the child dependent,
    —its methods are—force,
      —appeals to affection.
  Education—its aim is the freeing of the child,
    —it rests on prestige,
    —its method is the suggestion of adult example.

IV. References:
  Lynd, Robert S. and Helen Merrell—*Middletown.* Chapter XI.
  Root, W. T. The Individual in the Group—in *Concerning Parents,* pp. 177-194.

V. Questions:
  1. What may be the results of teaching your child that "Mother knows best"?
  2. List any principles of child management that you feel sure of on the basis of your own experience in dealing with children.

ILLUSTRATIONS I

AUTHORITY IN THE MODERN HOME

I. *Appeals to the Child's Affections.*

"If I want my son to obey me I tell him that I won't love him any more unless he does. Sometimes he will do what I want, as, for example, picking up blocks, but other times he refuses and says that he will get some one else to love him."

"I have had difficulty lately with a relative who is living with us. When my little boy does anything that she does not approve of she says, 'If you do that you do not love me any more.' I dislike this as it seems to me that the child's affections should not be a matter for bargaining."

"When my baby wets herself I am so 'ashamed' that this makes her dislike to do it again."

Question: Is this a fair appeal to the child's sympathies?

II. *Types of Leadership.*

Dominance:

"I want my children to learn to understand other people's views and not to try to force their own on our neighbors. But I myself have the hardest lesson to learn, for I find that I tend to be intolerant. I want to lead and direct the children of the neighborhood in their play. They all come to our house, and now I find that my own two children are becoming my lieutenants. My objection to this kind of leadership is that the other members stop developing and lack ideas."

"Don't you think you can tell when the parent has been too dominant? For instance, when a child leans on you for everything and doesn't do things he might have done and excuses himself by saying, 'I didn't go because you didn't tell me to, did you?' I'm wondering if it's a danger signal, because I have one like that. He won't do a thing unless he's told to do it."

Advice:

"When a child comes to you for advice, you give it to him on the basis of your own life's experience. If he doesn't see it your way, what else can you do but let him try out his own. We cannot hope to bring up our children exactly as we were brought up because conditions are so changed and it is up to us to adjust to these new conditions and in the new situations they may be just as right as we are."

Sympathetic Understanding:

"In my own case, my mother wouldn't have anything to do with me until I had apologized and even then I had to do penance. With my children I try to meet them half-way as soon as I see they have had a change of heart. At least, that is what I struggle for."

Discipline not Obvious:

"I take it to mean that discipline or authority should never be obvious. That would mean that there would be no recognized 'head of the house' in the old sense of the term."

Family Principles:

"About this matter of other family standards—for instance now, some families will keep the Sabbath. By the practice in the home they are taught that there are certain things we don't do. Then they go out to the neighbors and probably they will find that they play bridge, which isn't done in their own home. Now isn't it the home's place to teach the children certain principles, and should they not be taught that they must have a set of certain principles and stick to them regardless of other families unless it is hurting the neighbors?"

"I have said to the children that in their way other people may be right but for us these things seem right. If they have any argument for the other side, we argue it out. I don't want them to set themselves up above others, but I do try to show them why we think our standards are good for us."

"I should like to have them taught principles but I would like them to know that we do certain things or don't do certain things in our home and then they evaluate and form their own opinions about what they would like to adopt as their principles. We certainly find ourselves with very much feeling to-day against some of the principles our parents held and we find it very difficult to break away and yet very difficult to keep up with in these changing times. Oughtn't we to allow for changing conditions and permit them to know that our way is not the only way?"

"One should have some reason for making decisions other than through fear of what somebody might think. I recognize that with young children parents must be responsible for decisions but we should form them on the basis of what is best for the child's needs. In our management of children on Sunday, for example, we are often influenced by what the neighbors think or what has always been accepted as the proper way. Often children are victimized because we have not the courage to look further into the matter. I do not suggest that children do as they like but in attempting to regulate them, we should be prepared to carry through with what we have decided on the basis of what is best for them."

CHAPTER II

DISCIPLINE AND FREEDOM

Discipline is at the present time a less fashionable word in child study circles than freedom, but this very fact may point to discipline being a persistent factor in human experience. Points of view oscillate between extremes; a generation ago we would have heard much of discipline and little of freedom, to-day discipline has receded and "creative expression" is the watchword of the hour. However variously described, these two contrasting outlooks present equally essential realities. In life it cannot be denied that there is something wild, elements unexpected and unpremeditated, which emerge, from time to time, in defiance of all our calculations and traditions; there is also an equally fundamental tendency in human nature towards order—a desire to bring insurgent impulses under control, to reduce to system the unassessed values of the creative impulse. The attitudes of people to each of these aspects differ but are usually pronounced. The new is disparaged or accepted only on sufferance till we can invent a reason for it, which will square with our system of accepted values. Jazz, for example, offends the ear trained to the cadences of classical music; but with further experience, its own laws begin to be apprehended, bringing it within the sphere of harmony.

Extremes usually present difficulties. Meeting some novel experience for the first time, we feel the impact of all that is strange in it; opposition or enthusiasm may result. In any event, "great wits are oft to madness near allied," as the poet says and similarly the creative impulse, unregulated, passes readily into anarchy. But the same holds true of regulation. When the tendency to reduce experience to order is excessive, then conservatism, red tape and stagnation will threaten ruin. One outcome of viewing these matters at their extremes is that we then bifurcate life's values, hence, discipline and freedom are often regarded as wholly antithetical. For the sake of clear thinking it is necessary to urge the fallacy of any such conclusion since the two are strictly correlative. Either extreme carries with it its own corrective, people are driven back by the very exaggerations of the virtue they have been practicing. To-day "creative experience" is a rebound from an over-repressive form of discipline and because of this circumstance rather than upon the merits of the issue, the cry by certain exponents of the progressive education movement is expressed in terms of an alternative, Discipline *or* Freedom.

Must we forever be buffeted between these extremes? Is it not possible to uphold a synthesis of these two trends in human nature? Without creative force, the power to produce new ideas and new forms of action, life stagnates, becomes insufferably flat and routinized. But the fulfillment of an emergent impulse depends on its being assimilated with some body of organized experience. Thus, discipline, or the willingness to exercise our powers in an orderly and consistent manner, is generally the *condition* of effective creative work. Discipline *for* freedom would, therefore, be our watchword. How the integration of these two forces can be substituted for a warfare between them, harmony for strife, may become clearer if we look at the matter first through an historical survey and then through a closer analysis of what we mean by discipline and freedom.

Three Historical Views of Man's Original Nature.

The degree of emphasis given to *order* or *freedom* has received expression in theories concerning the nature of man. When human nature is thought of as *bad*, then repression and restraint, i.e., the "discipline," of insurgent forces has always been emphasized. Later, protest against too much regimentation and repression in time gives rise to the desire for escape to freedom, which in turn is justified on the grounds that human nature is essentially *good* and will attain perfection if untrammeled by regulation and convention. In contradistinction to these time-honored versions of human nature as evil or good, there is now a third view which holds human nature *indifferent;* the individual originally is morally neutral but contains the stuff out of which goodness or badness is evolved. This latter theory is naturally hospitable to attempts to combine freedom and discipline in an integrated experience. We may look briefly at these three views of human nature.

Original Nature as Bad—the Old Adam.

Many of us in the present generation who were reared before theology went out of fashion, can still claim some acquaintance with original sin. Among our illustrative statements by parents, at the end of this chapter, is one which refers simply and sincerely to the "original Adam" as the explanation of naughtiness on the part of a child. Such a view of original nature has a long history and is still soundly entrenched in certain religious systems. It is easy to be unfair to such a theory just because it is so foreign to the trend of thought to which most of us respond at the present time. It can be said, at once, for this view that while it has human nature begin bad it does not necessarily remain so; it can always be regenerated, for example, by the injection of supernatural grace into the life of the individual. The concept of salvation or achievement of higher ends thus has a place and furnishes a form of motivation in the lives of men.

The methods of training appropriate to such a view of human nature are interesting. Miss Forest in her history of the Pre-school Child * gives many suggestive biographical passages to show that fear, repression and punishment were judged methods proper to the conversion of the juvenile sinful into the redeemed being. Gentler methods were probably employed as well and once a modicum of good was admitted in the child, whether by nature or grace, the problem of origins became insignificant. To discourage the bad and to foster the good became the task of parents then as now. Whether life was to be lived for its present values or viewed as preparation for some future state was, however, a consideration of the greatest practical importance. The Middle Ages subscribed largely to what one might call the vestibule theory of life but with the beginning of the modern period even those who held the view of the original depravity of man's nature, were inclined to give full value to the present life in this world rather than viewing it as merely preparatory for the next.

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* Forest, Isle, *Preschool Education, a Historical and Critical Survey,* New York, Macmillan Co., 1927.

It was only towards the end of the nineteenth century that the decisive battle against the "Old Adam" view of human nature was finally won. This final warfare took the form of a struggle between the entrenched forces of organized religion and the new scientific outlook of evolutionary science. The impact of this on the training of children is reflected in the literature of the period. Edmund Gosse's *Father and Son* * etches with restrained but telling lines the portrait of a parent bound by the old theological convictions. It is interesting to note that a son brought up by middle-aged parents, without the companionship of other children, under an educational régime which contravened many of the principles of mental health, was yet able to attain a healthy adult development. The story of his emancipation is told without rancor, and with a fine discrimination of the good and bad in his training. The spirit in which he writes is a tribute to the character both of the writer and of the father whom he delineates.

Samuel Butler was less charitable to old ideas: *The Way of All Flesh,* written in 1872, is a brilliant and often bitter attack on the old theology and a vindication of the new scientific attitude. Butler was preoccupied with the child-parent relationship, especially as it was modified by the struggle between religion and science. His satire plays on the theme of original nature as construed by the church:

> "I think the Church Catechism has a great deal to do with the unhappy relations which commonly even now exist between

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* Gosse, Edmund, *Father and Son: Biographical Recollections,* Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1908.

parents and children. That work was written too exclusively from the parental point of view; the person who composed it did not get a few children to come in and help him; he was clearly not young himself, nor should I say it was the work of one who liked children—in spite of the words 'my good child' which, if I remember rightly, are once put into the mouth of the catechist and, after all, carry a harsh sound with them. The general impression it leaves upon the mind of the young is that their wickedness at birth was but very imperfectly wiped out at baptism, and that the mere fact of being young at all has something with it that savours more or less distinctly of the nature of sin." *

Original Nature as Good—The New Héloïse.

To attempt to demolish ideas which have long ceased to regulate our thinking, would be to tilt against a man of straw. The next conception, however, which sees human nature as fundamentally good, falls in a different class as regards its present-day influence. The idea itself has a long past, one of its most important services having been to guide the revolt of modern thought against the repressive view of life that had dominated the Middle Ages. It found its classic expression in the writings of Rousseau and is generally associated with his name. Since his day it has continued to exert a growing influence on the thinking of parents and educators. To some degree it supplies the theoretical basis for many modern educational experiments; it is even more influential in the thinking of many parents, who, revolting from the repressive discipline that colored their own childhood, have adopted what they believe to be a new doctrine of freedom for their child and in so doing have abrogated discipline almost entirely.

Our illustrations again afford examples of this type of thinking; but even more striking than these explicit statements are the many instances noted by leaders of study groups in which some such idea is implied. The child's nature is good, therefore, hands off, let him do as he likes. Like the king, the child can do no wrong. If any discipline is advocated, it is only the discipline of natural consequences—social controls are arbitrary and may not be tolerated. The classic example from our records is that of the child who was allowed to eat a whole cocoanut cake in order that he might be sick and discover that cake was not good for him. This shows the confusion that exists in the thinking of parents as to how far they are responsible for the child's actions. There are limitations to the doctrine of natural consequences which we shall discuss later; the point is here raised to show the difficulties and absurdities in which parents find themselves when they attempt to apply logically the theory of the fundamental goodness and rightness of human nature in the management of their children.

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* Butler, Samuel, *The Way of All Flesh,* Jonathan Cape, London, 1926 (first published 1903), p. 41.

It is perhaps noteworthy that what we have described as the "bad" theory of human nature produces the "good" child, that is, the child who perforce outwardly conforms to the type desired. The cost to human personality at which this goodness is secured is seldom taken into account. The same method may, of course, produce the rebel; but he was always accepted as a conclusive demonstration of the truth of the original assumption regarding the badness of human nature, never as a product of the system of training. The "good" theory, on the other hand, produces the "bad" child, the *enfant terrible* of social life. Both of these theories incline to extremes on the practical side in child training and we believe that neither has justified itself by its fruits.

Original Nature as Indifferent.

The third or "indifferent" is the one which most commends itself to present-day thought. According to it, human nature is neither good nor bad but possesses materials and potentialities which in due course play their part in the rise of these moral attitudes. In one sense this is as much a prolegomenon to investigation and factual observation as it is a theory. Presumably, it represents a scientific, impartial and experimental point of view in contrast to a philosophical or religious one. Instead of approaching human nature in terms of preconceived ideas, designed to color the findings, it starts with the challenge to discover what the facts and possibilities of human nature really are. It removes moral categories from the sphere of original impulse; that is, the appetites, instincts or whatever one prefers to call those basic activities from which conduct originally derives, are not inherently good or bad. Moral values emerge with use; it is the *way* we manage our hungers and thirsts, our fears and curiosities, which determines their worthiness. It is only when viewed through the sanctions of social practice and acceptance that human activity becomes conduct and assumes moral significance.

This view of human nature does not belittle the individual nor deny him a full share of responsibility in his inevitable problems of conduct. Rather it emphasizes the individual as a being, one, unique in himself, whose processes of growth and development are to be studied and fostered but not to be treated by an unvarying formula or forced into a prevailing mold. Respect for differences between individuals as resultants of the interplay between native constitution and environmental influences, is a fundamental article of the new creed. The individual is born with a given equipment, physical and mental, he grows and matures, his original forms of behavior and attitude can be modified by training and this learning extends, by degrees, to encompass the sphere of conduct—this in brief is the direction in which our third view points us.

The whole gamut of individual development and outcome is thus thrown open to investigation. The significance of this thesis lies not in the amount of information that it has yet afforded us but in the firm faith it offers that more and more can be ascertained, in truth, about the ways of human nature. The fact that behavior is modifiable by controllable means is itself the expression of a profound optimism in regard to the destiny of man. The present segment of a human life can never be regarded as final, but rather as prophetic of what man may become as we gain more insight concerning better means of guiding and modifying human conduct. The "indifferent" view of human nature is thus not oblivious to the importance of moral issues in life; it leads up to these as having a supreme place among realities but it refuses to begin with them as the basis of interpreting the whole of human nature.

It will be seen that in this way of thinking the principles of freedom and of order are given equal recognition. Freedom with discipline is the desideratum. Parents have the responsibility of discriminating among the child's reactions in order to foster those which seem to lead to a serviceable adjustment to life situations. Thorndike expressed this admirably, years ago, in his *Notes on Child Study,** one of the best of the early texts in this field:

> "What should be our practical attitude towards these inner tendencies? Because children do tend to develop in certain ways, should we aim to assist nature, to second with our educational endeavor the impulses with which she has provided the child? No! Only when they further the aims of education, only when they work towards moral ideals. What development *is* can never teach what it *ought* to be. No word, perhaps, is a poorer synonym for the good than the natural. We have to fight against, as often as for, the growth of the mind due to its inner predisposition.
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> "The attitude to take toward it is not to curse it as sinful, after the Puritan fathers, nor to worship it as a guide to education, after the fashion of some present day enthusiasts, but to use it as a handy means to our moral ends when possible and to subvert and modify it when it blocks their way. We use the river for transport and power when we can: when it bothers us, we dam it up and divert its course."

Outworn Meaning of Discipline.

"I never use the term discipline in my groups," a child study leader recently remarked. Undoubtedly this repudiation of the idea of discipline is not uncommon; it leads one to ask what are the ideas associated with the term discipline which people are so anxious to discard.

Probably the first difficulty is that for many people discipline has a negative meaning, it is thought of as implying restrictions, prohibitions, penalties, as a means of restraining from rather than inciting to action. Thus when we say that a teacher of the old school was a strict disciplinarian, we mean that his authority was firmly established and that deviations from the accepted order were not tolerated. So in family life, discipline has often the same qualifying adjective, "strict," carrying with it the implication of laws not to be broken. Punishment was usually the concomitant of discipline of the strict type; both in the school and the home, the breaking of rules brought with it inevitable consequence of some penalty, usually physical. It is not in place to discuss punishment at this point, but merely to point out that the present movement in child study away from repressive measures, and particularly from corporal punishment, has served to discredit that type of discipline which had been associated with such measures. In our haste to throw into the waste heap these ideas, relics of the "bad" theory of human nature, there has been little attempt to discriminate in that which was being discarded.

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* Thorndike, *Notes on Child Study,* Macmillan Company, New York, 1903, p. 142.

Naturally, those who have come under the spell of the "good" theory of human nature, see in such discipline the cause of most human ills. The removal of restraint, the freeing of the human spirit from the bonds which social convention has laid upon it, has been, since the time of Rousseau, a goal for ardent souls in education. We have already suggested that discipline and freedom should not thus be regarded as in opposition, but, in order to make clear their relationship, it will be necessary to elaborate the kind of discipline which we wish to see substituted for the older kind against which people are in wholesome rebellion.

The Meaning of Discipline.

Adolf Meyer, in a suggestive paper, entitled "Freedom and Discipline," * has given the etymological definition of the word as, "the art of making disciples." This suggests a meaning much wider than an application to the training of children and in such a wider sense it is, of course, frequently used. Thus we speak of the religious life, of certain disciplines of thought, such as mathematics or classical training. Both these uses suggest the initiation of the individual into a realm of thought and action in conformity with which he must bring his desires and behavior. He must learn to think and live in terms of the discipline to which he has chosen to conform, i.e., he becomes a disciple or follower of that particular way of living.

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* Meyer, Adolf, "Freedom and Discipline," *Progressive Education,* Vol. V, No. 3, 1928, pp. 205-210.

If we turn to another meaning of discipline, that of military life, it is perhaps easier to account for the resistance to the use of the term to which we have already referred. For in military discipline, the voluntary coöperation of the individual is greatly minimized and may be quite lacking. The authority exercised over those who are in submission to it is rigid and unvarying. Not initiative, not originality but unquestioning obedience is the virtue of the soldier. It is perhaps only in the home that obedience is exercised as uncritically as it is in the army.

There are, therefore, fine shades of difference in the concept of discipline ranging all the way from that of the convert who willingly embraces a certain way of life because it satisfies his deepest needs, of the scholar who devotes his life to abstruse and seemingly unrewarding studies because he finds his most complete satisfaction in this way of living, to that of the conscript, haled unwillingly into the ranks and forced at the price of his life to conform to the rules of a rigid system. In the former cases, the way of life is chosen deliberately because in following it the individual finds his greatest development; in the latter, it is something arbitrarily thrust upon the individual which may be quite out of line with his own purposes.

Now in the home, undoubtedly, all gradations and types of discipline may be found, from the completely repressive to the truly constructive and educative. Even in a given home the range of discipline forms may be almost as varied. But because so often in the past, negative rather than positive conceptions of discipline may have been emphasized, it seems worth while to examine some of the negative ones before proceeding to the more positive and constructive forms. The question of obedience, as an indicator of successful discipline, may first be considered.

The Bugbear of Obedience.

"How shall I get my child to obey?" is the question that almost every mother brings with her to the first meeting of a child study group. It is interesting to speculate on the reasons for this insistence. In part, it is, no doubt, a legacy from an earlier generation of parents when "Instant Obedience" was one of the maxims of child training, and when the readiness and completeness of the child's conformity were the acid test of the effectiveness of parental discipline. Parents still feel, whether or not they know, that if they can make their children obey in this sense, they are doing the right thing for the child. They may also take pleasure themselves in the consciousness of power that they derive through being able to control the child's actions. Such ability to regulate the behavior of others almost invariably augments the self-assertive aspects of one's personality.

Yet what seems the obvious first step to the parent may be the very thing which a leader with somewhat broader experience in child study will properly regard as a debatable point. There is here a pedagogical problem—how to get the issues clear before members commit themselves too deeply. She will wish the members of her group to get an extended view of the ways in which the child develops and of the motivating forces which underlie his behavior before they attempt to deal with a crucial social relation such as is involved in the question of obedience. "But we *must* have obedience" cries a distracted mother and the leader is then on the horns of a dilemma. To answer this question directly is as betraying as the old catch, "Did you beat your grandmother on Saturday?" If she answers this mother, "No," the leader will seem to be encouraging anarchy in a family evidently already in a state of simmering revolt. On the other hand, the answer "Yes" would sanction a state of affairs in which the parent is trying to exercise authority against which the children are in perfectly healthy rebellion. How to change this mother's attitude to problems of discipline rather than to give a categorical answer is here the issue, but this must inevitably be a long, slow process of reeducation in which comparatively little might be said actually on the subject of obedience.

Whenever obedience is emphasized in the thinking of the parent, it is evident that some outworn conception is still active. Where *constraint* is the means of authority, obedience will always be the virtue par excellence in the child. Where authority rests on *leadership*, that is, on the ability of the adult to initiate the child into desirable phases of experience, it will then become meaningless to talk about obedience.

It has been our experience that in the degree to which parents and teachers can be turned from seeking compliance by the child to seeking instead the positive fostering of desirable activity on his part—to that extent, we hear less and less about obedience. The person in control is now concerned not with securing conformity to something that she had laid down, but rather with devising means for stimulating the child's own activity, a quite different problem. Thus obedience falls into the background, not because one has resigned oneself to having disobedient children but because a shift in the emphasis to other forms of control has made the "command-obey" formula for behavior inappropriate. Thus if a child is keenly interested in some activity such as with blocks, in carpentering, in painting, etc., obedience is irrelevant to that situation. He himself wants to do the thing which we want him to do.

Our first objection, therefore, to obedience as a *sine qua non* of child management is that with increasing understanding of the child's fundamental motives and with increasing skill on the part of the parent in satisfying these motives in ways which are socially acceptable and which best minister to the child's development, the concepts of obedience and disobedience become largely unsuitable.

A second objection to emphasis on obedience rests on the qualities in the child which make for conformity in social behavior. Thom's chapter on Obedience in his well-known text * is an admirable analysis of obedience from this angle. He points out that the characteristics favorable to obedience are imitation, love of approbation and plasticity or suggestibility—all passive, negative traits. On the other hand, the qualities antagonistic to obedience are persistence, curiosity and initiative, these being active, positive traits. Parents while recognizing and making use of compliance as a virtue in their children are often curiously blind to the larger implications of this passive trait. For example, a father and mother became concerned over the docility with which their child of twelve accepted the judgments and standards of another girl to whom she was deeply attached. They were alternately amused and annoyed at their daughter's lack of independence. But actually they had long been capitalizing this readiness to comply with the wishes of others; they had always commented with approval on this child in their individual relations with her on the ground that she was "so easy to manage." It took some time for them to perceive that resistance to management might in this case and indeed in general be, on the whole, a healthier sign.

Are there then no occasions when the parent must decide and the child accept the decision? Undoubtedly, yes; the occasions when such an attitude of acceptance is desirable will be discussed in detail later. Thom gives certain practical rules for obedience, for example, that few commands should be given, that they should be clear and simple, with reasons wherever possible, that they should be positive rather than negative and that they should be consistently enforced in a take-it-for-granted manner. All these points we shall have occasion to return to in the course of the chapters following. Our present aim is one of emphasis, of relative values, in the thinking of the parent. When the parent's thinking is orientated towards a constructive plan, looking towards the child's whole development rather than merely towards getting the child to submit to this or that which the parent wishes, occasions which call for emphasis

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* Thom, D. A., *Everyday Problems of the Everyday Child,* New York, D. Appleton Co., 1928.

on the command-obey aspect of the situation will be relatively few and insignificant. Such instances as need occur will fall into place as temporary obstructions in the path of the child's progress as when a parent deals with a child's resistance, promptly and effectively, in order to set him free to do something worth while. If these instances are well managed and then dismissed they will not loom large as a clash of will between parent and child wherein the parent must come off victor in order to demonstrate his superiority over the child. The accent of the parent's thinking will be not on his ascendance over the child but on the learning process by which the child is coming to rule himself. To this end, however, the parent must be a co-learner with the child.

The Nemesis of Dominance.

It is perhaps easier to see what obedience does to the child than to realize the effects that commanding has on the adult. We all recognize and shun the "heavy" father, the managing mother or mother-in-law, and in general the "school-teacher" attitude to life is only too truly proverbial. If a girl teaches too long there is a common belief that her chances of marriage are lessened thereby. What lies behind this, other than the fact that if she habitually practices a domineering attitude with children, it carries over into wider social relationships with disastrous effects on personality? No one can afford to be habitually dominant any more than he can afford to be habitually the under dog. Indeed, it may almost be said that wherever one member dominates there is evidence not only of maladjustment in the family situation but within the dominating individual's own life.

In home life the *command attitude* is usually a sign of weakness. In the illustrations following this chapter will be found the naïve confession of one mother that she told the child to do something "very calmly" *although she knew she would not obey her.* Here is cause and effect with a vengeance. Had she felt any confidence in her power to control the child, a command would have been unnecessary; had she not given the order, the child might have felt no impulsion to disobey. Children must, with their uncanny insight into our motives, realize that when we insist it is often a sign that we are unsure, not only of them but of ourselves. Multiply this many times a day and attitudes become quickly crystallized.

Discipline Throughout the Life Cycle.

It is time to turn to positive conceptions of discipline. A concept so far-reaching and fundamental should not be discussed merely in relation to the child. This limited view of discipline as the prerogative of parents over children, together with the negative ideas involved in obedience, is the chief reason for the discrediting of the term. Discipline has been thought of as something arbitrarily imposed on children, a control which they grow out of as they do of their clothes, discarding it at a certain stage for the magic freedom of adult life. The clothes analogy is a good one if we remind ourselves that adulthood does not involve the discarding of clothes but rather the adoption of new styles, this not only because the old ones are outworn but also because fashion introduces new forms which we progressively adapt to our bodies and our personalities.

Discipline should be thought of in the same way, as a *progressive* control by which we learn to meet new as well as old needs of the social situation. There is thus one kind of discipline for the two-year-old, another for the school girl, another for the adolescent and many for adults. But at no period can discipline be discarded, for discipline is simply the principle of regulation or control within life. To some degree in some circumstances, we may be able to choose the type of control to which we submit but we cannot escape the fundamental fact of control, either by ourselves or by others. The lawless man attempts this escape but his attempts usually land him behind bars or other social barriers; or if he escapes this control, he falls a prey to his own fears or greeds. To choose the types of control which through life's successive stages lead towards effective social adjustment, is therefore the problem.

Discipline for Parents.

There is an important implication in respect of the range of discipline. If discipline is good for children it is good for parents as well. The effort after self-direction and self-regulation has to be continuous to succeed. We may not hide behind our adult status in order to excuse ourselves for faults which we would unhesitatingly condemn in our children. That learning is possible at adult levels, in the sense of a measurable process, is one of the most significant of recent contributions in educational experimentation. Nowhere is it more applicable than in this sphere of the self-regulation of behavior.

The parent who works at self-improvement and self-control in his own experience is the one who usually is best able to control his child. This brings us back to Meyer's definition of discipline as the art of making disciples and to our own idea of the authority of leadership. In the last analysis, not the power to compel, but the *prestige* of the adult constitutes real authority. That prestige rests on what the adult is in himself, on the way in which he manages his own life.

It may be objected at this stage, that merely to launch on a career of self-improvement will not guarantee that our children will become perfect. What, specifically and definitely, should be the relations between parents and children during those early stages of the child's life when by reason of his inexperience he cannot be expected to assume full control of his behavior? How is the parent to know when it is his business to exercise control and when he should allow that control to be assumed by the child for himself? Also, what is the real place of freedom in the experience of the child and of the adult?

Routine and Freedom.

In an earlier book * we have elaborated the view that the fundamental activities of the young child can be regarded as falling into two groups. On the one hand are certain bodily needs which ordinarily can be satisfied only through specific appropriate conditions, as hunger by food, sleep by quiescent surroundings, elimination by its peculiar circumstances, etc. Such activities are relatively explicit in the sense of depending upon one or a limited range of external conditions for which reason they are readily subject to control from without. On the other hand are needs equally compelling but less specific which can meet satisfaction in an infinite variety of ways, as the need for bodily movement, for sensory change, etc. Our position is that in regard to the young child, responsibility for directing the specific activities, which can fairly easily be circumscribed in terms of "routine," should rest with the parents, whereas for the less specific activities, routine would be highly undesirable. In the former case, discipline in its narrower meaning of external regulation and control is relevant, as for the feeding routine of an infant where freedom should be at a minimum. But of the non-specific activities, the reverse holds true, freedom will assert itself in the child despite attempts to impose external discipline.

The reasons for parental direction of a child's specific activities are not far to seek. To begin with, the young child's health is largely affected by his food, sleep, toilet habits, and to regularize these in appropriate routines, represents the best care that can be given. Again, the child is not in a position to judge what is good for him; nor are the consequences of his actions likely to be so dramatic that he will read their meaning from an infringement of his prescribed routine. A child's power of perceiving causal relations is slight unless these are very direct and his learning to do so proceeds but slowly. The parent, therefore, must judge when it is wise to let the child experience directly the consequences of his actions. Thus, if a child refuse to eat, it is highly advisable to let him go without a meal, as this will do him no harm physically and is a direct demonstration that refusal to eat the food provided means being hungry. On the other hand, one would not let a child eat a whole cocoanut cake, as cited above, for the consequences would be bad whichever way things fell out. If the child were sick, it would certainly indicate that his well-being had suffered from the debauch but it would not follow that he had learned the dangers of excess even though the incident were to leave him with a permanent aversion for cocoanut flavoring; if he were not sick, the situation could have no convincing value for him of the folly of a greedy consumption of sweets. Only when the consequences of an act are immediate, sure to follow and sufficiently dramatic to be really convincing should the child be allowed to experiment with his routine to see what will happen if he shifts the demands it makes upon him. Such experimental proof of consequences is in the main legitimate only with older children. Miss Johnson's comment * that little children are not greatly interested in routine activities, but regard them more or less as preludes and hindrances to the main business of living, play, is very pertinent here. For this reason, if for no other, it seems better for the parent to take responsibility for the child's routine. Compliance on the part of the child should here be assumed and the parent should carry the prescribed routine through regardless of the child's opposition if need be.

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* Blatz, W. E. and Bott, Helen. *Parents and the Pre-School Child.* William Morrow and Co., New York, 1929.

It is not our purpose here to discuss the details of training in routine habits, which have been dealt with in our earlier text; we wish rather to discuss the *methods* by which such training can best be effected. For either standpoint, however, the concept of discipline in regard to the young child as a positive régime of right habits established in relation to the daily routine is fundamental to our philosophy of child training.

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* Johnson, Harriet, *Children in the Nursery School,* New York, John Day Co., 1928, pp. 23-4.

Extending Responsibility.

If our end is self-regulation, how are we to safeguard the taking over by the child of the responsibility for managing his own routine? There can be no set answer to this question. Responsibility must be fed out to the child as rapidly as he is able to take it. But the catch here is that parents may be slow to recognize the child's development. Children often have to *steal their independence*. A child of five slips away from home, goes several blocks, crosses a car line, buys gum with her own money and sidles back into the family circle with the explanation that she has "just been taking a little walk." Should this be regarded as (1) a dangerous adventure, (2) a rebellion to be punished, (3) an indication that the child is ready for a degree of responsibility in the regulation of her own actions which the parents had not yet allowed? If we decide to adopt the latter position it should be remembered that we are not yet giving the child the freedom of the city to go where she likes and do what she likes, but we are prepared to enlarge her responsibility for self-directed activity provided she can demonstrate that she is watchful in danger situations and that she is doing what is acceptable to the family group.

The independent child may steal his liberty but what of the child who prefers leading strings, who shows no initiative on his own behalf? Here the parent may have to anticipate self-control by putting responsibility on the child. Just as parents find that instead of keeping a child in diapers till he is dry, they should stimulate him to be dry by putting him in pants, so a moderate amount of responsibility given just in advance of the child's powers may be the necessary stimulus to independent action on his part.

Watchfulness and anticipation on the parents' part will usually solve the question of when to hand over responsibility to the child. If the *parents' attitude* is right, there will be little difficulty in making this adjustment from the point of view of the child. The great difficulty is to get parents to *desire* and work for independence in their children.

The Results of Discipline.

It may seem that in all this discussion discipline has been magnified and freedom lost from view. But we have perhaps only now reached the point when we can think of *discipline as a means to freedom.* Thus in the care of the young child, his routine is a means to freedom. The child who rises, dresses and eats his meals promptly, who sleeps at the right time and who is well-regulated in his eliminative functions, suffers from a minimum of restraint by reason of these necessary duties—the rest of his time is set free for play. Also emotional conflict and its attendant frustration is largely eliminated when the child has learned to co-operate readily in the prescribed routine. Doing promptly and willingly what is expected of him is the condition of being free to do what he really likes. This is appreciated by children in the nursery school who on coming back from the washroom often call attention to how quick they have been, with the added comment, "So I could get back to my blocks."

Similarly, with older children, if each is definitely held responsible for certain set tasks or chores in the household, the prompt discharge of this work leaves him free to follow his own pursuits. Parents should then be scrupulous about not invading the leisure of children by numerous demands for special services.

With the adult, discipline usually expresses itself in ability to do with dispatch the things which he has to do and power to postpone enjoyment in the hope of an ultimate satisfaction greater than the present can yield. If we look honestly at our own experience, we will admit that the sense of freedom comes not from indulgence but from control, that is, from control not in the sense of mere negative restraint but of the *focusing of our powers on some desired end.* Inspiration waits on effort. Creative expression depends not so much on some vagrant wind of fancy as on the steady direction of our powers towards some end or goal.

Discipline is thus not an end in itself, but a means towards freedom and creative power. The temporary restraint put on our impulses is in order that ultimately they should find fuller satisfaction. Yet here our education fails if we have not been *trained* for freedom. We need to be educated to use our leisure in such a way that it will furnish the deepest satisfaction to ourselves as well as leading to forms of conduct which are acceptable to the society in which we live.

The Child's Use of Freedom.

Just as it is the adult's duty to regulate a child's "routine," so, when it comes to play, his duty is *hands off*. To routinize this free activity by interference is to destroy it. He is getting his first experience in managing his own affairs, trying out his own capacities, exploring the world of fact and fancy. Adult regulation should restrict itself to seeing that the child has abundant material on which to exercise his powers and that he is safe from danger. Participation in the child's play is permissible provided the adult has the skill and imagination to do so at the child's level. Apart from this, play should provide relief from regulation and should afford opportunities for the development of independence and creative power. As the routine represents discipline in the life of the young child, so play provides the counterpart of freedom. It is the parent's concern to facilitate both of these that they may form a healthful whole.

A Constructive Use of Freedom.

We are learning something of the play needs of the young child, but with older children and adults there is need for study of the whole question of leisure and freedom. Perhaps nothing is more needed at present by the majority of parents than a more liberal amount of leisure time and a trained imagination for its wiser use.

The first point depends upon numerous factors, many of them beyond one's personal control, but one pertinent requirement is to examine rigorously our actual activities to see *how many things we can leave undone.* William James wrote an essay years ago on the gospel of relaxation—a gospel even more needed to-day than it was in James' time. But if he correctly diagnosed the temper and characteristic dangers of American life, we may well heed his message and seek for ourselves a release from impulsions and non-essential obligations—a discarding of unnecessary baggage from our journeyings.

The second point calls for a richer cultural environment, both material and social, so that we may make effective use for ourselves and for our children of the freedom which we have secured. The increasing vogue of amusements in which people are mere passive spectators, indicates the need for education in the constructive use of leisure. Power to enjoy is, in the best sense, a goal of the good life. It is useless to cultivate a discipline which leads to power if we find ourselves bankrupt in social and emotional resources which power should enable us to use. It is important to lead our children to the goal of self-control by example and by progressive initiation but it is equally important to secure for them and ourselves a rich cultural experience through which to exercise this power.

OUTLINE II

DISCIPLINE AND FREEDOM

I. Two Values in Experience:
    Discipline—order, control,
        —tends to regimentation, stagnation.
    Freedom—creative impulse,
        —exaggerated becomes anarchy.

II. Three Views of Original Nature:
    Bad—emphasizes punishment and repression,
        —produces the "good" child or the rebel.
    Good—abolishes restraint,
        —produces the "bad" child.
    Indifferent—emphasizes—individual difference,
        —modifiability by education.

III. Types of Discipline:
    Negative—depends on force,
        —obedience in children,
        —dominance in parents.
    Positive—rests on prestige,
        —community of experience between children and parents.

IV. The Uses of Freedom:
    The Young Child's experience—routine stands for discipline,
        —play stands for freedom.
    Adult's experience—need of training to use freedom.

V. References:
    Meyer, Adolf—Freedom and Discipline, *Progressive Education*, 1928, pp. 205-210.
    Lee, Porter—Children and Leisure, *Child Study*, February, 1928.

VI. Questions:
    1. What are the difficulties of enforcing a routine with young children?
    2. When is it legitimate to interrupt a child in his play?

ILLUSTRATIONS II

DISCIPLINE AND FREEDOM

I. *Contrasting Views of Original Nature.*

"My child of three has a tantrum whenever I go out in the car without him. When he sees that I will not take him, he cries and screams so that the nurse cannot do anything with him. He has respect for me that he does not have for the nurse. I will not allow her to punish him. He is a sly little fox and knows this. He quite realizes that he may not come with me, but he is set on going and so makes a scene. It is the *original Adam* coming to the surface. If I leave without punishing him, he goes on misbehaving and wrecks the afternoon for the nurse. He is always bad when he comes in contact with her.

"I think his misbehaving is the dawn of personality. He wants to express himself and over-expresses himself in the only way he knows. He is proving that he is somebody and trying to demonstrate it to every one else."

"I sometimes feel disgusted with the behavior of my three-year-old, as when she deliberately soils herself. But I try to remember that this is perfectly natural from her point of view and that it is *my* reaction to it that is wrong."

Question: How would you set about to modify the attitudes of these two mothers?

II. *Parental Attitudes to Discipline.*

"At a certain age the child wants to assert his will power. Very often he is asked to do something quite usual and says 'No.' It is a surprise to the parents as the request may be a reasonable one to which he has always agreed before. You must be patient with the child and overcome it. *The parent has to be victorious.*"

Question: In what situations is it necessary for the parent to be "victorious"? What are the dangers of this attitude?

"A maid who was with me when the children were little was sometimes left with my three-year-old boy. When I came home I would find him in the window watching for me and she would tell me that she had been unable to make him obey. I would say, 'Look at you, a big strong girl, weighing about two hundred pounds and you tell me that you cannot make the child obey. Take him and do what is necessary.'"

"I heard a mother call a child and say, 'Take off your sweater.' The child could not or would not be bothered. She kept telling him to take off his sweater as he would be too warm. I would have taken it off and not spent so much time about it. What relates to habit is essential and should not be a matter for debate. When this is accepted the child has more freedom."

"If children are accustomed to doing a thing immediately one has no trouble with their neglecting to do things. I have always said what I wanted done in a decided way and then followed it up. My children have regular hours for bed-time and meals and nothing is allowed to interfere with these routine things.

"I have recently had an experience with a little girl, the daughter of a friend of mine. Her mother tells her to do so and so but then she does not see to it that the child does it. When she is with me, the child will do as my boys do, for I watch and see that it is done. For example, I expect her to fold her serviette when she is through a meal and she generally does this. Sometimes, though, I have to look at her if she starts to put it down without folding. You save yourself so much wear and tear if you check up from the start."

"What would you do with a child who is exceedingly independent and determined to do things for herself? She always wants to brush her teeth, but she pokes and takes so much time that one has to go and do it for her—and then there is a tantrum. She wants to put off the time as she has to go to bed after. It is just a habit that she has of taking a long time. She washes herself in exactly the same way, washes the basin and everything around her and is often late for meals.

There is nothing to deprive her of and it would cause a great row if I did not let her do it."

"I have a little girl of two and a half, whom I have never been able to persuade to do anything. She must always be forced to do everything. A few days ago, I had a caller and this child was in the room and decided to play the piano. She is usually a shy little thing. I said, 'Jean, don't play now. Just get down,' very calmly, although I knew she would not obey me. I did not expect her to as she never has. She did not stop and I said, 'Mother will have to take you down if you do not stop.' I could not allow her to play with a guest there. Finally, I picked her up and set her in a chair away from the piano. She then began to kick and scream. I called the maid and asked her to carry Jean out, telling her that when she was ready to stop crying she might come back. In about five minutes, she came back with a smile on her face."

Question: What had the child got out of this incident?

"Our children have an inordinate craving for sweets. We decided to let them have all they wanted in the hope that it would make them ill. Three of them, aged three, five and seven, ate a whole cocoanut cake among them. *It did not make them sick.*"

Note: Discuss these "attitudes" of parents, indicating which ones are likely to lead to a good adjustment between parent and child.

III. *Delegating Discipline.*

"If one studies the care of children seriously it is pretty hard to hand over discipline to an inexperienced maid. The child usually takes advantage of the situation when the mother leaves."

"It is not necessary that maids should understand *why* they are to do certain things, all that they need to know is that this is your method and, therefore, to be followed. If you train them to do, when you are not there, what they would do if you were at home—that is sufficient."

"There are many things that happen when you are not present that cannot be foreseen. The child does take advantage of the person left in charge. I never slap my child, but I have a maid who does it when I am not there."

(See also the first case in these illustrations for another example of delegated responsibility.)

Question: What policy should one adopt with nursemaids or others to whom the care of children is delegated?

IV. *Transition to Self-discipline.*

"Instead of 'instant obedience' I try to give the child warning so that he can adjust to a new situation. I also try to ask for direct obedience only when it is necessary. So often we command when a suggestion would do equally well."

"My children are older but I try to tell them ahead of time what I want them to do. I like to plan my day and I assume that they would like to do the same. In an emergency they accept my word willingly."

Note: Consideration begets confidence as well as encouraging initiative.

"I find that my children are much happier when they are carrying responsibility than when some one is trying to entertain them. I think they are distinctly responsibility-loving creatures."

V. *Contrasting Kinds of Leadership.*

An Inventive Mother:

"Children feel more free to entertain their friends when they have a place of their own. When my little girl was small, we did not have room for a playroom, so we made one in the basement. We put up wooden frames and covered them with unbleached cotton, thus making a play-house. They had doll's furniture, etc. On Saturday mornings the place was crowded. Sometimes the place was placarded for measles, sometimes it was operations for tonsils that were performed. My little girl seemed more free to bring other children to the house than the boy who had no place of his own."

A Child Dependent on Adults:

"My little girl will not stay in her playroom. She likes to be with people and if she is left alone she at once wants to come where she can see or hear them. She sits in the kitchen or in the living room, or else she just wanders about from one place to another. She has a tendency to boss everybody. When she is with other children, she will insist on supervising their play and bossing them even though they are not much younger than herself."

Question: How far do the attitudes of the children in these two incidents reflect divergent methods of management on the part of their parents?

CASE II *

Roy. Age 3/6 I.Q. 108.

Problem as stated by mother.

"Frequent temper tantrums—will not eat—cannot understand his speech."

History.

Family life:
* Father: Age 35—banker—an only child.
* Mother: Age 33—only child—no occupation before marriage.
Siblings: None.
* Other persons in home: Paternal grandmother and grandfather living in same house.
* Maid—age 47—has been living with family for 12 years.
Home: Large ten-roomed house—garden—sandbox— separate room for child.
Obstetrical History: Nothing unusual.
* Developmental History: Late weaning at 16 months,—"intestinal upset" at ten months—refused solid food—kept on bottle.
Attitudes: Very fond of sweets.
* Motor: Late walking—used "toddler" till 14th month.
* Speech: Late talking—persists in baby talk—difficulties; r, l, th, and s—no stuttering, stammering or cluttering—no organic difficulty.
* Eating: Refuses all new foods—temper tantrums at mealtimes—urging, coaxing, spanking and forced feeding used spasmodically—frequently eats a good wholesome meal—eats with family.
* Elimination: Training instituted late—no attempt other than

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* The case histories in this volume follow the form of those presented in our earlier text. Where categories are marked with an asterisk this indicates a significant factor of maladjustment in the situation. For a case history form together with a description of the methods used in our consultation service, see *Parents and the Pre-School Child,* pp. 309-323.

scolding and commiseration—is not taken up at night—dry during daytime.

* Sleeping: Bedtime irregular because he cries when bedtime appears—grandparents say he shouldn't go to bed too early—maid says he should be sent to bed early—parents feel sorry for him and are alternately severe and lenient—temper tantrum usual when he goes to bed—frequently insisted upon sleeping with mother.

* Play: Has never played with other children—with parents, grandparents or maid continuously.

Sex: No difficulty.

* Emotions:—Fears: Only at nighttime—when his mother goes to him and soothes him.

—Anger: Temper tantrums very frequent and increasing in number.

Self-tendencies: Very shy with strangers—cries frequently.

* Discipline: No regular routine is maintained for very long—corporal punishment occasionally by father and grandfather—maid interferes with advice very frequently.

Diagnosis.

There are five "bosses" in this family, not counting the child. The child is expected to live up to adult standards without the opportunity of living under a consistent system. This child was brought to the clinic as a "psychopathic" child. The first examination ended in a rebellion of the child against the demands of the examiner, necessitating the removal of the mother and a period of twenty-five minutes of patient waiting, until the child, realizing that his method would not work, quieted down and proceeded with a simple test. He was then allowed to go home with his mother.

Recommendations.

It was pointed out to the parents that they themselves were only children and that although not an impossible task, yet it was an exceedingly difficult task to bring up an only child in a totally adult environment. ✓

The mother was brought in after the first examination and the situation was described and analyzed. The child was not psychopathic, but was a bright child using *his* method to gain his ends and that if the consequences of his behavior could be consistently arranged, he would use a different and more social method for *gaining the same ends,* which were, in themselves, not vicious.

A regular routine was suggested:

—Meals at regular hours—child to eat alone.
—Food to be placed before child and removed after thirty minutes without comment, neither condemnation nor commendation.
—Regular bedtime—child to be placed in bed despite resistance—door to be locked if necessary.
—Child to be taken up at 10 o'clock every evening and taken to the bathroom.
—If possible, child should be taken to the park or other children asked into the garden to play with him—more interesting outdoor apparatus to be provided.
—With temper tantrums, at meals or during day, the child should be taken to his room and left there—the door to be locked if necessary.
—Only one person should be in authority, preferably the mother.

Results.

A weekly record was submitted by the mother—for two weeks the results were satisfactory—then the grandparents objected to the isolation of the boy and allowed him out of his room, after being placed there by his mother—they advocated corporal punishment.

It was advocated that the grandparents take a visit for a few weeks, which was arranged.

It took 16 weeks of consistent and patient training before the household settled down—at the end of this time, a fortunate opportunity came for placing the boy in a play school for three hours in the morning.

It was only through the sincere coöperation of both parents that this reëducation was possible.

The child still wets the bed at night but a continued routine will soon clear up this situation.

CHAPTER III

THE NATURE OF CONTROL

In the preceding chapters our argument has been that since independence, or the capacity for self-directed action comes gradually but at last truly expresses adulthood, we should endeavor to cultivate this in our children. Further, we hold that such a goal is realized through the correlative experiencing of discipline *and* freedom, with these tending to blend at the higher levels as the personality matures in self-control. Thus towards our daily work, if it be of our own free choice, there is no attitude of constraint, in other words, freedom realizes itself in the doing of those things which we accept as being of worth. How then can we as parents help our children reach this goal for themselves? Definite leadership by the adult is, of course, necessary in the early stages if the growing up process is not to prove abortive or twisted; such leadership, however, changes its form as the child passes from one stage to another until the level is reached where adult control rests on respect through deserved prestige, but always there remains a pervasive influence in the child's experience. How adult control may be exercised in the early stages of the child's life in order to secure for him an adequate experience at that level whilst preparing him for further emancipation as his development proceeds is the problem to which we now turn.

Learning the Rules of the Game.

It has sometimes been remarked that the experience of a well-cared-for baby is akin to omnipotence. His wants are unfailingly anticipated, and he has as yet no sense of limitation as he has still to discover the range of his capacities. As he emerges from babyhood he experiences an extension of his powers and hence also a limiting of them from without. Freedom and control are already in action. His physical and mental abilities develop rapidly—in particular he learns both to talk and to walk. It is impossible to think ourselves back to these childhood experiences, but let us imagine that in adult life we should suddenly come into possession of new powers such as the ability to project ourselves through space at will or to read the thoughts of distant persons. Exhilarating as such prospects at first appear, one can see that complications might arise. The lover might find his lady with another caller, the merchant his client bartering with a rival,—in short, the privacies that protect personality would be dissolved and in self-defense we should have to invent new ways to safeguard the privacy of the self.

Far-fetched as this illustration is, it may serve as a parable of what actually happens when the child, no longer prone in his cot, staggers out on his own two legs to explore the world. He sets out to investigate his surroundings by as many avenues as possible. He has no experience of danger and no sense of social taboos. His new-found freedom is apt to be rudely checked when his explorations become dangerous to himself or annoying to those about him. It therefore becomes necessary to teach this new member of the social order what things he may and what he may not do. At this stage control from without is essential for the infant to be initiated into the ways of the group, but this control must not crush the new shoots of freedom.

Conflict between the child's impulses and the habits of the group is bound to arise when the drive to freedom encounters the ordered forms of social custom in the home. This impact is likely first to become acute when the child is from two to three years old. The greater incidence of temper tantrums at this than at any other period of childhood is evidence of the fact that such conflict is part and parcel of the developmental process. To some degree conflict between individual drive and social inhibitions is a normal and inevitable phenomenon which persists through all phases of life; it ebbs and flows, its peaks are always crucial periods and extremes of conflict are always dangerous to mental health. Although social regulation must encounter some measure of individual resistance this is a necessary condition of social progress. The life of the individual is enormously enriched by having the wider experience of the group made accessible, but, on the other hand, the group would stagnate were it not for the new life infused by individual initiative and resistance. Counter resistance of the group to what is new is proverbial, the innovator is thus forced into the position of a rebel, but his resistance is often the tonic that a jaded and too routinized society, institutional system, or home circle, needs. What is done with rebellion, either in the state or in the home, is a good indication of the general health of the institution. According to the way in which it is used conflict may either destroy or renew life.

It may seem a far cry from our meddlesome toddler to the nature of the social order but the relation is really a practical one. The way in which the young child is helped to live through his first conflict situations may be largely prophetic of how he will meet later demands for more complex social adjustment. How to develop a type of character that is sufficiently resilient to meet social pressure without being crushed by it is a problem to which parents and all those who teach must address themselves.

Extremes of Control.

Extremes of control—or lack of control, are easy to recognize. The following incident is quoted at length from our records as exhibiting the two extremes in somewhat dramatic form:

"I was in a station waiting room when a woman entered with a boy of about twelve years. She led him to a seat, commanded him to sit down, speaking in a voice of the greatest sternness. She then opened a newspaper and spread it out before him with the injunction, 'Read this, and don't dare move till I come back!' These words can give no impression of the stertorous tones in which this was uttered. The woman then left. I watched the boy with interest. He might, of course, have been a fire-bug, or a victim of other criminal tendencies, but his appearance and behavior were perfectly normal —except for the lack of any sign of resentment of the woman's treatment. He sat quietly reading the paper till she came back, when she again addressed him in the same brusque and forbidding fashion as they went out together.

"Later in the same day I was having lunch in a restaurant when two young people entered with a child of about three years. The child was promptly enthroned in a high chair, and the parents then addressed themselves to the task of finding out what he would have for dinner. The waitress recited the menu which was relayed to the child by the parents. Then they anxiously awaited his verdict. As he refused one item after another they would shake their heads sadly and convey the news to the attendant: 'No, he won't have eggs on toast, he won't have raspberries and cream . . .' and so on in the lugubrious tones of a Gilbert and Sullivan chorus. They became quite sprightly again whenever he showed any signs of accepting anything that the menu offered. I finished my lunch and left before the child's dinner had been selected."

These instances might be paralleled over and over by any one who is alert to watch the handling of children by adults—especially in public places. They show that many parents have no conception of when the child should be allowed to regulate his own affairs and when some one should do it for him. Thus the child in the first instance was ridiculously over-regimented, but it was equally absurd to allow a three-year-old to choose his own lunch. He might have been allowed some latitude of choice, but should not have had the menu placed at his disposal. Yet parents not uncommonly feel that they are training the child's will if they let him choose for himself in this fashion. What they are actually doing is confusing the child and making him vacillating and uncertain. The contrary, pampered attitude of the child in this illustration showed how completely he had usurped the control which should have been exercised by his parents. He then used it, not to regulate his own affairs, for of this he was incapable, but to brow-beat those who should have been in control. The twelve-year-old, on the other hand, should have been left alone in the waiting room as a matter of course without being humiliated by warnings and commands. His early training had been at fault if that much self-regulation could not be taken for granted.

Stages of Control.

Extremes being easy to recognize, the practical problem is to be able to decide just how much adult regulation is necessary or desirable in ordinary and borderline situations. It may perhaps help us to think of the different stages through which the child passes in the long process of learning to regulate his own actions. Let us begin with the infant, for it is here that the rudiments of control should be learned. He cries, and unless there is special reason the nurse does not go to him. He is picked up, not when he cries but when the time comes to feed him. He thus learns that not crying, but a fixed time interval brings him the satisfaction his hunger dictates. This is a most elementary form of control—the routinizing of a simple physiological appetite.

With the pre-school child a much higher level of control may be observed. His tantrums, let us say, have been consistently ignored; and the peak of their frequency is passing; finally the day comes when something angers him, he is getting ready to burst into tears, when suddenly we see him stop. His lip trembles, the tears are in his eyes, but he walks away. He has just enough strength to keep the anger fit from overflowing in its usual unrestrained form. He is gradually learning the lesson that tantrums do not get him anywhere.

Come one step further to the school age child who is, let us say, expected to practice the piano for a certain length of time each day. She habitually reneges on this, and the mother finds herself developing a nagging habit which is causing constant friction between herself and the child and failing in its purpose of getting the practice done. The mother thinks over the situation and decides that a better control is indicated both for herself and for the child. She therefore talks it over with her, explains without heat the cost of the lessons, and asks the child what amount of practice is really necessary. Then a settled amount is agreed on, and a division into periods related to the daily routine is worked out with the child's coöperation. The mother may find it necessary occasionally to check up to see if the child is keeping to the terms of the agreement, but in most cases where the child has any real interest in music, a consultation of this sort, and the placing of the responsibility on the child, will solve the difficulty.

One last example, an adolescent boy of fifteen has just made the school football team. He is tremendously proud to belong, voluntarily submits to a rigorous regimen of sleep and diet, to long hours of practice, and to playing the part assigned to him in the team. The prestige of the group is here so great that no sacrifice is too much for the return of being taken within its charmed circle.

These examples seem to us to present a sort of hierarchy of control in which the activities involved become progressively more complex and more integrated while at the same time the child becomes more actively responsible as we ascend the series. Adult control forms the background from which control by the child emerges, except in our last case, when control by a slightly older and more experienced group of his peers is exemplified.

Types of Control.

If we look at the sorts of control exercised by adults we may distinguish first of all between the direct and indirect type, that is between those situations in which the adult immediately and overtly influences the child's behavior and those in which indirect control is maintained through a general regulation of environmental conditions, both physical and social. In the latter sense control is a persistent, unescapable factor throughout all life. What we are is to a great extent a function of the people and the surroundings among whom we have lived. It is true, of course, that as we develop we begin to choose the influences to which we will submit ourselves. We decide to go to college or to go into business, to run away to sea or to marry; each such choice means a voluntary submission of ourselves to a certain set of environmental influences. To choose one set means, naturally, the rejection of others. William James expressed this in his classic chapter on the Consciousness of Self: *

> "Not that I would not, if I could, be both handsome and fat and well dressed, and a great athlete, and make a million a year, be a wit, a *bon-vivant,* and a lady-killer, as well as a philosopher; a philanthropist, statesman, warrior, and African explorer, as well as a 'tone-poet' and a saint. But the thing is simply impossible. The millionaire's work would run counter to the saint's; the *bon-vivant* and the philanthropist would trip each other up; the philosopher and the lady-killer could not well keep house in the same tenement of clay. Such different characters may conceivably at the outset of life be alike *possible* to a man. But to make any one of them actual, the rest must more or less be suppressed. So the seeker of his truest, strongest, deepest self must review the list carefully, and pick out the one on which to stake his salvation."

In other words, freedom to choose our own environment implies voluntary submission to the very condition that we have chosen. Such vital choices will depend to a great extent on the kind of environmental control to which we have been exposed and trained in our early years. Control of this pervasive sort is so profoundly significant for all experience that we wish to devote our next few chapters to a discussion of its two main aspects, physical and social. But before discussing these more fundamental aspects of the subject of control the narrower topic of direct control calls for attention.

When Is Direct Control Relevant?

There are three types of situation where direct control is unquestionably legitimate, namely in danger situations, in routine matters and in respect of social conventions. The necessity of direct control to avoid physical injury with young children is relatively infrequent but will be discussed later. We have already dealt with the second point, the parent's responsibility for initiating the child into right physiological habits by means of a systematized routine of training. Such control is exercised by the parent as surrogate for the child, the aim being the gradual assumption by the child of the management of his own affairs and person. If it be objected that such regulation may make for dependence of the child on the adult, we can only say that from our observation it has not proved so in experience. A good routine facilitates self-reliance in the child, provided always that it is used by the parent with that end in view and not as a means of coercion.

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* *Principles of Psychology,* Vol. I, pp. 309-310.

In respect of social usages, the child has to learn that there are certain things that are done, and others that are not done in the circle in which he lives. Confusion may arise when he alternates between two spheres whose codes are different. Thus the pre-school child may learn that you get things by waiting your turn in the nursery school, but by kicking and screaming at home. The school age child may have one code of honesty and truthfulness in dealing with the teacher and another in his relations with the gang. We are none of us all wool and a yard wide; we are rather a patchwork of different colors and fabrics with the persisting pattern yet to be evolved. In a sense we have as many selves as we have acquaintances. To achieve some sort of congruity among our various selves, our working self, our golfing self, our kitchen and parlor selves, our 8 A.M. and our 12 P.M. selves, is the meaning of the integration of personality. This is the final product, however, and not the beginning of social education. What we started to point out was merely the fact that the young child must become amenable to the customs of his family group, and that such customs must be accepted in the first instance on a simple basis of authority. We don't throw stones in our neighbor's garden, or shout in the room where adults are talking; we do go to church, or to the movies, or whatever the prevailing custom of the group in which we are placed may be. Criticism of family custom will come later, and parental authority will have to stand or fall according to the validity of the rules it has set up when these come to be tried by experience. So far as the little child is concerned he accepts without question prevailing family customs. Practical rules of some sort are a necessary condition of group living.

How Is Direct Authority Exerted?

In an inquiry now in progress at the St. George's School for Child Study we have been attempting to find out *how* parents interfere directly to modify their children's behavior. A tentative classification of the results thus far obtained is given at the end of this chapter.* One interest in this list lies in its representative character and in the readiness with which all the well-known modes of direct control were assembled by means of such observations. There is in it, however, nothing that is new. It is interesting to note that in a book written in 1872, called *Gentle Measures in the Training of the Young,* by Joseph Abbott, the same fundamental methods are described.† The validity of Abbott's classification is corroborated by our results. The correspondence shows also how little methods with children have changed from then to now.

Abbott describes a situation in which parents wish to go out driving and do not intend to take their young child with them. He submits that there are three main ways in which parents attempt to regulate such a situation, first, by "maneuvering and artifice," secondly, by "reason and affection," and lastly by what he calls "authority," but what we would prefer to call decision. In the first case the parent tries to escape without being seen by the child, or if caught, the mother says that she is going to the doctor's and that the doctor would give the child nasty medicine if she were to come. That is, deceit and subterfuge are the only resources which she knows to draw upon.

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* See pages 82-83 following.

† Abbott, Jacob. *Gentle Measures in the Management and Training of the Young,* Harper Brothers, New York, 1872, pp. 13, 59, 221, 253.

> "As the chaise drives away, Mary stands bewildered and perplexed on the door-step, her mind in a tumult of excitement, in which hatred of the doctor, distrust and suspicion of her mother, disappointment, vexation, and ill humor, surge and swell among those delicate organizations on which the structure and development of the soul so closely depend—doing perhaps an irreparable injury."

It may seem that such procedures have been largely abandoned, but the writers are familiar with practices even among presumably enlightened parents which have exactly the same implications.

The second method, that of *reasoning and affection,* is still more widely in vogue; indeed it seems to be the method which commends itself to the parent who is studiously avoiding repressive and harsh methods of control. But when reasons are offered as a justification of the parent's course of action, what is really happening? The child is made the court of appeal before whom our actions are weighed. Explanation, so called, then becomes argument—or a bandying of words between adult and child. Such an interplay merely foments discord and irritation in the child, if, indeed, it is more than a game for him, while it robs the adult of his normal ascendancy. The fundamental objection to both these methods is that they put the child in a false position of power, making the adult subservient to the attitudes of the child. In the first instance the adult tries to circumvent, in the second to placate the child. Both are contrary to the natural dominance which the adult should exercise by reason of his experience and responsibility.

The third method, that of *authority or decision,* means simply that the adult makes up his mind what is to be done and does it. That is, responsibility for decision lies with him and not with the child, he takes this responsibility and acts accordingly. This seems so simple and obvious that to state it would seem unnecessary, yet acceptance of this principle and action upon it we find to be relatively rare. In cases where the responsibility for decision can only properly rest with the parent, it is much easier for all concerned to have this understood from the beginning; Abbott states:

> "For every parent will find that this principle is a sound one, and of fundamental importance in the successful management of children—namely, that it is much easier for a child to do what he does not like as an act of simple submission to superior authority, than for him to bring himself to an accordance with the decision by hearing and considering the reasons. In other words, it is much easier for him to obey your decision than to bring himself to the same decision against his own will."

And again, when children cannot be allowed to decide, "it is true kindness to them to spare their minds the painful perplexity of a conflict."

Three Stages in Decision.

The difficulty in control on the basis of decision lies not in understanding the principles involved but in knowing how to carry them into effect. We fail in control in a given situation often because we do not have a definite plan to follow. Planning for control involves first of all *anticipation.* Many of our difficulties with children arise because we do not look ahead and see what is going to happen. Rather we let an untoward situation develop and then act to check it, whereas had we been alert we could have dealt with it by evading its rise.

Secondly, as *decision* suggests, we must make up our minds what to do. This may involve waiting till we hear the child's side of the matter before we make a decision. Hasty judgment on the parent's part, especially in relation to some request which the child makes, often puts the parent in a position of disadvantage, for if the child produces a good reason for what he wishes to do the parent must either retract an earlier decision, or persist in it in the face of evidence, in either case weakening his authority. On the other hand, if he takes pains to get the facts and then makes a decision on that basis his prestige is strengthened. He may afterwards, if he likes, give the reasons why he has decided as he has but in this attempt he may find, as has been said of a certain judge, that he is usually right. This process of getting all the evidence in before making a decision is entirely different from the method of argument and explanation to which we have been objecting. In the former case the parent keeps his natural dominance which he forgoes in the other.

Lastly, and most important, the parent must be *consistent* in making and carrying out decisions. In one case that came to our consultation service the child with whom the difficulty had arisen remarked to his mother anent some remedial proposal, "Yes, you'll do that for three weeks, like all the other things you have tried. That's about your limit." The mother admitted ruefully that this was so. We shall have occasion again to refer to consistency as the virtue *par excellence* of the parent, but Abbott's comments on the subject are so apt that we again quote him:

> "It is very easy to see how smoothly and happily the affairs of domestic government would go on if these rules were established and obeyed. All that is required on the part of parents for their complete establishment is, first, a clear comprehension of them, and then a calm, quiet, and gentle, but still inflexible firmness in maintaining them. Unfortunately, however, such qualities as those, simple as they seem, are the most rare. If, instead of gentle but firm consistency and steadiness of action, ardent, impulsive, and capricious energy and violence were required, it would be comparatively easy to find them. How seldom do we see a mother's management of her children regulated by a calm, quiet and considerate decision which thinks before it speaks in all important matters, and when it speaks, is firm: and yet, which readily and gladly accords to the children every liberty and indulgence which can do themselves and others no harm. And on the other hand, how often do we see foolish laxity and indulgence in yielding to importunities in cases of vital importance, alternating with vexatious thwartings, rebuffs, and refusals in respect to desires and wishes the gratification of which could do no injury at all."

And in another passage:

> "Nothing is required, it is true, but firmness, steadiness, and decision; but, unfortunately, these are the very requisites which, of all others, it seems most difficult for mothers to command.

They cannot govern their children because they cannot govern themselves."

Masterly Inaction.

But while we have been trying to suggest certain rules to guide us in direct control it is necessary to enter a caveat against the continual interference of parents in their children's affairs. Probably more parents err by doing too much than by doing too little for their children, or, rather, they err by direct interference when indirect influence is infinitely more valuable. Parent education groups may even augment this tendency to be always meddling with our children's development—digging up the plant, so to speak, to see how it is growing. People who are new to child study are apt to get the idea that this or that is of overwhelming significance; they are forever trying out new methods on the child. When these trick remedies fail they become discouraged and decide that there is nothing in parent education. The difficulties of the home situation have meanwhile been aggravated by this constant meddling.

On the other hand, one wonders if the most valuable result of a really fundamental training in child study does not lie in the things we learn *not to do.* Is it true that as one's experience widens and one's thinking deepens, one comes more and more often to the startling realization: "Why, I would not dream of doing that to my children now!" This is not a mere negative attitude, it represents a positive philosophy of the child-parent relationship, which tends more and more to free the child from over-regulation and restraint. To leave undone the things which we ought not to do is as real a virtue as to do those which ought to be done.

It is a good practical rule for parents to ask themselves in a given situation, "Is it necessary that I do anything?" "What will be the consequence of my refraining from action?" Unless they are sure that either positive good or the prevention of harm will eventuate, the wise plan is to withhold action. Similarly, in those problem situations when one is baffled and no clear course is indicated, a safe rule would seem to be to do nothing. Many difficulties clear up with time if left alone. In an old children's book there is a story of the mother pig who advised her little ones, whenever they did not know what to do, to go to sleep. The same advice might be offered to harassed parents, but with the postscript that one eye should be kept open to the situation.

When, therefore, parents refrain from overt interference in their children's affairs it need not be interpreted as indifference or carelessness on their part. They may be interested spectators from the side lines who know that the game goes better if they intervene only in a crisis. Meanwhile, they may be influencing the whole situation profoundly, though indirectly, in that they are responsible for the whole setting in which the game is played.

Formulas or Philosophies.

This leads us back again to the distinction between formulas and philosophies with which we began. The person who is interested in direct control is looking for formulas—a recipe for obedience, for truthfulness, for good manners, for promptness, and so on. When, however, people begin to think of the more fundamental social influences which condition human behavior they are less concerned with quick results and more about the final effect on the character of the child of the procedures that they adopt. If one's thinking is oriented towards self-reliance in children one will be less interested in doing things for him, and more keen to set the stage in such a way that he will be motivated to do things for himself.

Two Schools.

A simple illustration may help to make this difference clear. Let us imagine a visit to a kindergarten of the old-fashioned type, a kind not yet vanished from our schools. Here is an appearance of perfect order, the children are busy weaving, cutting, folding, doing just what the teacher tells them. When the work period comes to an end, the word is given and at a signal they rise, carefully put their chairs away, and march to form a circle. Then follows a succession of games, songs, dances, all carried out with the faultless precision of a military drill at the direction of the teacher.

Contrast with this the behavior of children in a nursery school or "free" kindergarten. Here there is the appearance of disorder and confusion. The children move hither and thither at will, they are all doing different things, and sometimes coming in conflict with one another in doing them. Much of the work seems at first sight to lack constructive or educative value from the adult point of view. Blocks are piled up only to be knocked crashing to the floor, wagons are dragged about the room, one child paints, another models in clay, a third is watering plants, or feeding a bowl of goldfish. Even in the story circle some may wander away and busy themselves with picture books in another part of the room. The orderliness, the quick response and ready coöperation that marked the first situation are missing here. It would seem that there is no method, little control and only an anarchy of individual impulses in this second situation.

But let us apply some of the principles we have been considering to a more careful evaluation of these two schools. Control there certainly is in the first situation, but whose control is it? That of the teacher. Watch her in the center of her group; she is the authority and the children's part is to follow her directions as promptly and perfectly as they can. Look again at the second situation. There is no mistaking the freedom, because the children are unquestionably doing things that they choose. But what does this freedom do to *them?* Where does it lead? The belief underlying the practice of the nursery school and of many of the "new" forms of education is that the child learns through the opportunity to do things for himself. Thus, instead of always suggesting and directing, we leave the child free in considerable measure to follow his own desires. He decides what he wants to play with and how he wants to play. He is left free in the belief that growth thrives on freedom.

This does not, however, mean that control on the part of the adult is lacking, but rather that it has changed its form. It is exerted positively in supplying the child with a suitable physical environment, that is with the sort of materials that will call out and develop his powers. Secondly, it provides him with a social environment—of his peers and others—another essential to optimum growth. The social environment is regulated with extreme care, though largely in a negative fashion, by protecting the child from too much interference from other children, and in particular from overstimulation by adults. But though control of this sort consists in fending off as much as in injecting influences, it is nevertheless a real control.

Imperfect Children.

Now, take this comparison over into the home situation. Surely we have just the same contrast between two fundamentally different types of control, the old-fashioned kind in which the adult decides just what is good for the child, and the newer method which tries wherever possible to let the child make his own choices. Under the old type we may again get the superficially pleasing picture of the polite child, amenable to adult standards, easy to get along with, at least easy for adults, because he has learned to conform to adult standards. On the other hand, those of us who are striving after the type of control which resides in the child rather than in the adult can seldom hope that our children will present such a tidy picture either physically or morally. How can children be finished products when they are only learning to manage themselves and their surroundings? We have to accept the fact that to the superficial critic we do not make as good an appearance with our unfinished children. We can only hope that a long view of the situation will justify our emphasis on indirect control. If our children grow up to be happy and self-reliant people who are able to adjust well in their relations with others we shall have justified our aim and method.

Indirect Control.

Indirect control often obviates the need for direct control. It may do this through understanding on the part of the parent of how much pressure the child can stand. The brown sugar incident at the end of this chapter admirably illustrates this point. The mother should have known that a child of four could not be expected to resist the sugar bowl when left alone with it. By removing the sugar she could have averted the whole difficulty. Instead of this she allowed it to develop and then stepped in with direct control of a most reprehensible sort by way of punishing an offense that had arisen through her own error. *Prevention* in this situation would have been the most effective means of control.

Closely related to the preventing of difficulties from arising are those situations where by the *substitution* of a desirable for an undesirable form of activity the child's action is diverted into safe channels. In one of Dorothy Canfield Fisher's stories a child on the verge of an acute temper tantrum was saved by becoming interested in the complicated workings of an egg-beater. This bothers many parents who feel that the tantrum should have been allowed to occur and the child then punished for having one. Probably the difficulty lies in a fine shade of difference in the parent's attitude. If a mother has to offer an egg-beater or its equivalent to her child whenever the sky begins to lower, then the result can only be bad. But if she really diverts his thoughts from his own emotional states to some impersonal interest or constructive activity, surely the child is better for having had a profitable instead of a debilitating experience. The difference is between distraction when the parent's main motive is to avoid a scene that is unpleasant to herself, and diversion when the child's energy is turned from destructive to productive uses.

In the third place, indirect control emphasizes positive values,—control through *enrichment* of experience is the most effective because the most fundamental of all methods of control. We have all known people who were restless and dissatisfied, ineffective, perhaps with an easy job, or none at all, who became resourceful, competent and cheerful when a more exigent situation presented itself. The more demanding situation called out the full measure of their latent powers. The child who is restless, whining, unstable at home may become cheerful and energetic at summer camp; the idler in one school may be the prize-winner in the next. The difference may lie in what the situation demands and what it has to offer, that is, in the challenge to increased activity directed to ends. To call into play the powers of the child through a stimulating environment is the object in indirect control. It has creation rather than regulation as its aim.

Satisfaction versus Problems.

This positive emphasis on the child's satisfaction as a criterion of desirable activity is significant. Our legacy of repressive training, even though we are in revolt against it, has conditioned us to think too largely in negative terms. Thus we think of child training as having to do with difficulties, failures, maladjustments. "Have you any problems?" is apt to be a stock-in-trade question by group leaders unless they have themselves undergone a process of re-education till it comes natural to them to think in terms of the normal and of positive enrichment. Porter Lee in a significant paper on "The Family as a Constructive Force in Mental Hygiene," * has made this timely suggestion that we should orientate our thinking to the value of satisfying experiences as a means for the education and integration of family life. His experimental study of what constitutes such satisfactions in the experience of the child is of great practical interest. We shall have occasion to refer to some of his findings in more detail later. It is significant to note that the investigation from which he has drawn his tentative conclusions shows that experience which emphasize the child's independence, especially his promotion in status, and also those which Lee describes under the picturesque term,

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* Given at the First International Congress on Mental Hygiene, Washington, May, 1930.

"festival," are outstanding as sources of lasting satisfaction. The rôle of indirect control in providing opportunities, both for independent action and for unexpected enrichment of experience, is easy to envisage.

Will versus Environment.

Despite all that may be said of the value of indirect control, many parents continue to feel misgivings on the subject. They feel that control of the child through the regulation of his environment is an unworthy substitute for that control which the child should be able to exert over himself through the exercise of his will. Undoubtedly that type of control which makes the individual capable of choosing wisely among alternatives is the highest sort of control, but such discrimination waits on training. It may even be as William James says somewhere that "no" is higher than "yes," but if so the power to say "no" should be looked for later, not at the beginning of the child's training. For example, in the brown sugar episode, advocates for the "will" would claim that the child should have been able to say "no" to the lure of the sugar bowl. Our position is rather that the child learns to say "no" not through any arbitrary fiat from within or without, but by the gradual building up of a habit of not eating brown sugar unless on permitted occasions. The will is not a mechanism which furnishes decisions like a penny in the slot machine; it is rather the cumulative result of a long series of learning situations, wherein external control by others has largely been superseded.

Parents are sometimes concerned lest they are in danger of breaking the child's will if they thwart him in some particular. The answer to this surely is that a child's will must be made before it can be broken. Crude original impulse must be governed and turned to purpose before we can speak of the child as having a will, that is, of being able to make intelligent choices. Our conviction is that a wise regulation of the environment is the best means of such a fashioning of the will.

Plan of the Succeeding Sections.

In the next two parts, therefore, we propose to discuss control from the point of view of regulation through the environment, first in respect of its physical and second of its social aspects. It is, of course, impossible rigidly to separate direct from indirect control, but the emphasis will rest on the latter. In the concluding part on motivation we hope to review this same question of control, viewed not externally, as in the discussion of regulation through environmental influence, but from the point of view of the experience of the individual, the inner impulse which rises in response to outer motivation, fusing with it to constitute action directed towards ends. It is through this harmony between outer control and inner incentive that integration of personality and good mental health may be achieved.

OUTLINE III

THE NATURE OF CONTROL

I. Control involves:
    Adjusting the individual to a social situation.
    Making conflict profitable.

II. Direct Control:
    Relevant in—emergency situations,
        —routine,
        —social conventions.
    Exerted through—anticipation,
        —decision,
        —consistency.

III. Indirect Control:
    Prevention.
    Substitution.
    Enrichment.

IV. Inner versus Outer Control:
    Development of the Will.
    The environment as a means towards inner control.

V. References:
    Johnson, Harriet—*Children in the Nursery School,* pp. 1-21.
    Meyer, Adolf—Normal and Abnormal Repression—*Progressive Education Association Bulletin,* No. 13.

VI. Questions:
    1. What methods were used to control you when you were a child? How effective were they?
    2. What methods do you now use—to control your children?—to control yourself?

ILLUSTRATIONS III

THE NATURE OF CONTROL

I. *Conflict Situations.*

"When the child gets stubborn, really unreasonable, what should you do? Should the struggle be fought out to the bitter end? I have had cases where my boy of two seemed in a fighting mood, and I have often ignored the whole thing, just going away and leaving him."

"I had a good example the other night of a temper tantrum. I asked my boy (four years old) to put away his toys. He didn't want to. I said: 'You put them away for Miss —— (the teacher in the nursery school), why can't you do it for mother?' He said, 'I don't want to.' I didn't know what to do. I don't like spanking but I find it works. I waited a while trying to think what I should do. But he kept on saying, 'I won't.' I have to admit that I lost out completely. I had to put the toys away. I said, 'I see that you don't love mother as much as Miss ——.' When I put him to bed the young imp wore a very self-satisfied expression as much as to say, 'Well, that's that!' "

"I've been trying to divert my child to get him to do things. He sometimes refuses to go to the bathroom, so I divert him and he is there before he realizes what is happening. However, I do not find that this always works very well. What should I do? Even if I ask him to do a special favor for me at times he won't. I have sometimes said that I wouldn't read to him at night if he didn't do what I ask. That works, but I feel that it is threatening, and that probably isn't good."

"What would you do when a child of nine says, 'I won't' when it is time to go to bed, and goes kicking and screaming all the way upstairs, with you behind her prodding her to make her go. Surely you cannot let a self-willed, obstinate child like that have her own way. *We must have obedience.*"

"Doesn't one have to find out what is at the bottom of conflict situations at the school age? When one is dealing with a ten-year-old, it is not wise to apply the rules we do with a three-year-old. I wonder if it is a matter of controlling one's own attitudes. We have been having difficulty with practicing music lessons. I found myself nagging the child so much that she was reacting very badly. She was answering everything I could say with 'Oh, you just make me work all of the time. You don't think I ever should go out and play.' Her father said to me, 'You are actually building up a strong resistance against the music practicing and not getting anywhere. The more desirable thing would be to get her to take over the responsibility for the practicing.' He talked to her that evening, being less emotionally involved, and she agreed to practice an hour and a half each day. The other evening she said, 'Well, I've only practiced one half hour to-day, that leaves an hour to do, doesn't it? I think I'll read the funnies and then finish my practicing.' I said, 'Don't you think it would be better to spend one-half hour at the piano then read the funnies to break up the long period and after that finish your practicing.' She thought that was a good idea. Probably this illustrates how rules can be made with the child's coöperation, so that the child takes an interest in and accepts responsibility for her own management."

"Well, would you allow children to stamp their feet and scold, and do nothing about it? In all seriousness, what is to be done? I have said in such cases, 'Now, I've told you what I think is the best way of doing this thing. If you can't see this, try your own way.' Often their ways are just as good as ours, only *we don't seem able to brook their opposing us.*"

"I think you have to stop, look, and listen. We have a fixed way and children may, as Mrs. B. says, have their own way which may be just as good as ours. We were having trouble with our thirteen-year-old who was wanting to go out every night to a hockey match. We felt that he could only stand so much of that and were not letting him go most of the times he asked to. It was getting pretty difficult so we got together, my husband, myself, and the boy, and talked it over. It was decided that he could go to matches Friday nights and if something special occurred during the week, then he must not ask to go Fridays. For instance, if he went out Wednesday night, he promised not to ask to go Friday night. This has quite cleared up the difficulty and living is once more a pleasure. Before we were always hearing how mean we were and that he never could have any fun."

Question: In the above instances, how far would you be guided by (1) the *age* of the child, (2) the nature of the activity in question, routine or otherwise, in deciding whether to use direct or indirect control?

II. *Imperfect Children.*

"I want my child to have a tidy playroom, especially when people come to visit. With me this is just pride. I am ashamed if others are around to have them see that my training hasn't been sufficient."

"I am often humiliated at what my children do in the presence of strangers. Then I realize that I wouldn't mind so much if they were not there looking on. We have to learn to pocket our pride, and to think about what is best for the child in each situation, not about our own self-satisfaction."

"How long is a period of showing off in a shy child likely to last? She was a very bashful baby, it was agony for her to be looked at by strangers when she was a year old. Now she shows off all the time. When visitors come she stands on her head, is silly and wants to be the center of the stage. We try to take no notice of this showing off, and send her upstairs if it becomes too bad."

III. *"Breaking the Child's Will."*

"Is there danger in breaking a child's will? The other day my boy threw ice and snow into the vestibule so that it had all to be cleaned up. I punished him for doing this, as he knew better."

(Asked why she had not simply made the child, who was nine years old, clean up the mess which he had made, the mother answered that she had read in the Women's Page of one of the daily papers that when a child was asked to do something and refused he should not be made to do it, as this would break his will. He should be punished for not doing it, and the matter then left.)

Question: How can the discipline of natural consequences be made to apply in a case of this sort?

"I was visiting at a home where the daughter, a child of ten, was asked to play the piano. She did not wish to do so, and her mother asked her to take the music and put it away. Instead she took it and threw it on the floor. Her mother told her to pick it up, and she looked her coldly in the eye and refused. The father commanded it. She still refused, and was sent to her room. It took a struggle of five hours before she did what she had been asked to do. Her father would go up and say, 'Are you ready to pick it up now?' and she would still answer, 'No.' She was sent to bed at seven-thirty, at eight-thirty she began to cry, and was quite broken when she finally did it. Her mother was in tears, thinking she had *broken her child's will.* She thought that a 'good sound spanking' would have availed more than this conflict of wills between the child and her father. *The child is very self-willed and headstrong.* This disposition has shown itself all her life."

Questions: Was the child's self-will the *cause* or the *result* of the kind of treatment she received? What did the father accomplish by his method of treatment? How would you have handled this situation, and why?

"How can you keep children out of cupboards? I cannot keep my little girl two minutes out of the cupboards. I don't want to break my little girl's will power but she nearly breaks mine. *She is one year and ten months old.*"

IV. *Non-intervention.*

"Postponement often clears up some situations. One of the children came home the other day in tears because one of her friends had written her a note saying that she did not want to play with her any more. Mary was dreadfully upset, and was going to retaliate, saying this and that in reply. I suggested that she wait till her father came home and we had a chance to talk it over with him. But before night she had met the other child on the street, they had made up, and all was serene again."

"Should a child of eight be allowed to choose his own companions? What if he wants to play with children who are undesirable?"

Leader: "Even a child of two should be allowed to choose his own friends. The only time you should interfere with his choice is if he persistently plays with children who are much older or much younger. In such a case you should try to provide companions of his own age. Apart from this, it is much better to let children work out their own destiny. As soon as you start to select companions you become arbitrary, and then one must ask: 'What is your criterion of desirability?' As you know, we get ourselves all wrought up over this matter of companionship, and yet after all they seldom last more than six months."

"When children come to me complaining about one another, 'Bill hit me' or 'Jack took my wagon,' I seldom try to get at the rights of the matter. I just say, 'I am sorry, children, but it is impossible for me to deal with it. Go upstairs till you feel like playing with one another.' Unless you have seen what happened it is waste time as a rule to try to unravel the thing from the children's accusations. I try not to scold, nor to participate in their disputes."

V. *The Child's Resistance.*

"A little girl of three and a half was exceedingly fond of sugar. At breakfast one morning her mother had just filled the sugar bowl when she was called to the telephone. When she came back the bowl was half empty. She said:

" 'Marjorie, did you touch the brown sugar?'

" 'No, mother.'

" 'Are you *sure* you did not touch the sugar?'

" 'No, I didn't, mother.'

" 'Now, Marjorie, you told your mother you did not touch the sugar when you did. Mother knows you did, because God told her you did. When you say you have not done a thing that you really did do, that is what we call a lie. A lie is very naughty, and mother will spank you for telling a lie.'

"The child was then spanked."

HOME OBSERVATIONS ON DISCIPLINE

The types of difficulty and methods of coping with them employed by parents are suggested in the following tables from an unpublished study by one of our Leaders-in-training. The data pertain to twenty-two children under six years of age upon whom eighteen mothers reported one hundred and eighty-seven incidents. The categories in each table represent the differentiation recognized by parents in their own procedures. The relative incidence under these headings is of little significance until more data are available. We believe that they indicate certain trends of practice.

Table I shows the high incidence of occasions when parent and child come into conflict. Table II indicates the range of methods employed by parents and the fact that some methods are much more commonly used, and with a greater measure of success than others.

TABLE I

OCCASIONS NECESSITATING CONTROL

Parent's Description of Cause of Difficulty	*Ages of Children in Years*					*Totals*
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	
Number in age group	2	5	7	5	3	
Refusal to comply with routine	13	16	17	8	4	58
Interference with adult possessions	14	9	11	1		35
Doing something forbidden	2	2	6	4	4	18
Interference with other children		5	7	5		17
Danger situations	1	3	4	2	2	12
Refusal to obey		2		6	3	11
Dawdling	1		3	3	2	9
Tantrums		2	1	4		7
Accidents	4			1		5
Showing off				4		4
Quarreling		1		2		3
Running away		1	1	1		3
Teasing		1		1	1	3
Fears			2			2
	35	42	52	42	16	187

TABLE II

METHODS USED TO CONTROL CHILDREN

Parent's Description of Method	*Parent's Judgment on Method* *Number of Times Used*			*Total Times Used*
	Successful	Unsuccessful	Doubtful	
Removal of child	23	9	1	33
Explanation	20	8	1	29
Substitution	22	5		27
Force	12	9	1	22
Deprivations	11	5	1	17
Ignoring	6	2	2	10
Threats	5	4	1	10
Removal of cause of trouble	5	4		9
Commands	6	3		9
Giving in to child	5	3	1	9
Helping child	7			7
Punishment—physical		5	1	6
Acknowledging error	6			6
Coaxing	2	3		5
Appeals to pride	3	1		4
Warnings	4			4
Distraction	3	1		4
Reasoning	3	1		4
Retaliation	1	1		2
Imitation		1		1
	144	65	9	218

PART II

THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

CHAPTER IV

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTIVITY

UPON the management of young children we are choosing to consider first the physical and later the social environment. It is obvious that actually these are never separated; the child is learning from birth to react both to people and to things, but his modes of reaction are different in the two cases, and as the physical environment presents fewer complexities it seems best to begin with it.

The Child's Need of Activity.

Any one who has watched a newborn infant must have been impressed by the amount of movement which it displays. Its arms and legs flex and shift, feebly or vigorously as the case may be, the fingers wave idly about but will tightly grasp a presented object, the head turns from side to side in restless seeking movements, especially if the child is hungry. Now certain unitary forms of these movements, such as blinking, grasping, the knee jerk, sucking and so forth, science has sorted out from the rest, and calls *reflexes.* These are relatively simple movements characterized by the fact that they occur in more or less unvarying or "patterned" form whenever their specific stimulus is presented and are prompt, dependable, and brief in their occurrence. Along with these are the more general and variable movements of the infant, which, because of their seeming lack of objective, are sometimes called *random* movements. These are, of course, not uncaused but their stimuli are obscure and non-specific. The important thing for our purpose is to recognize the general and largely undirected nature of most of the movements of the infant—the "all-overish" character of the response which he makes to the world about him.

Differentiation and direction of action he has yet to achieve.

As the child grows older this aimlessness tends to disappear as his movements become more and more oriented to specific objects. The baby no longer merely wriggles his toe, he tries to put it in his mouth. He is not content with following a moving object with his eyes alone, he reaches for it as well, gradually learning to coördinate eye and hand movements. He not only closes upon his rattle but shakes it, and later he will look for it when it drops; he smiles when his mother bends over his cot, and so on. In all these instances his response is becoming more and more differentiated, that is, he is reacting to one selected part rather than to his environment as a whole. The *selective* tendency is now paramount. Not only is one portion or "situation" selected out of the environment but also the organism's response loses its "all-overish" character for a specific reaction by some bodily member. Thus the earlier more general activity is suppressed or, more accurately, subordinated, to reënforce and supplement whatever main direction response assumes. Energy is finding outlet in one channel instead of overflowing through the whole organism. Selection gives point and direction to response which in turn helps to mark out that portion of the environment which shall serve as the appropriate stimulus. Even at the infancy level therefore the organism exhibits directed activity and seeks, that is, selects, the appropriate stimulus to satisfy its needs. This, of course, is not the whole story since the environment also acts upon the organism, but the interplay is a mutual or circular one which may be regarded from either direction.

This selective tendency carries forward through the stages of childhood into adult life, with the mental aspects assuming ever-increasing prominence over the purely physical or physiological. By degrees we learn how to inhibit gross movements and to limit our responses to fine movements of the throat and larynx in speech, or of the fingers in writing, though with children such inhibition cannot be long sustained without reversion to general activity. But even the large bodily movements, such as walking, are carried out with an economy of conscious effort which regularly characterizes our habit levels of action; energy has been canalized into well-defined channels. Increase of control over our physical movements thus gives us freedom to develop a wider range of them. Nevertheless always there remains the possibility of an overflow of more or less unnoted and unintended movement. Under certain circumstances this may crystallize in the form of mannerisms or tics. More usually it may be seen when persons concentrate upon some difficult activity—they bite their lips, smooth their hair, fold their handkerchiefs, draw meaningless diagrams on paper, and indulge in a multitude of other aimless and unadapted forms of response which represent a kind of leakage of activity. Applied to child experience this should help us to understand how difficult is that process of education which aims to bring about the suppression of movement. Ability to sit still, and to keep quiet, which we assume in adults and parents commonly expect in children, is a difficult art to learn. In fact the power to relax at will is one of the highest forms of self-control, but very essential for mental health. The child's need for activity is unending; our problem is to help him gain control.

The Runabout Child. (ex. P.L.)(!)

The runabout child is the personification of movement as the descriptive name suggests. Climbing, jumping, large bodily movements, are added to locomotion. At the Merrill-Palmer School certain children were equipped with pedometers in an attempt to get an objective measure of their activity. The method was found to be not very accurate, but the results obtained showed an average of from forty to eighty-six movements per minute of the right arm and leg alone in the group studied.* This amazing total corroborates one's casual observation of the activities of the small child.

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* Sweeny, Hejinian, and Sholley, "A Method for Studying the Activity of Pre-school Children," *Journal of Home Economics*, Vol. 21, No. 9, September, 1929. Also Sholley, Rebecca, "A Study of the Activity of Eight Nursery School Children, Merrill-Palmer School," June, 1928. Unpublished.

Rest and Activity.

In addition to the quantitative aspect of the child's activity the above study indicated also by means of observations that activity of high intensity tended to alternate with periods of relative inaction. Only one child performed continuously for a period of five minutes at a level of high intensity. We quote from the unpublished report:

> "He repeatedly ran up an inclined plank, jumped into the sand-pile on reaching the end, turned a somersault, got up, and started again. This (five minutes) was the longest period of strenuous activity observed in the ninety-six hours. At the other end of the scale, however, very different conditions were found. The children were all able and willing to spend periods of from five to fifteen minutes in unbroken inactive occupations."

Enter the Adult.

Such in sketchy outline is the picture of the young child whose activities the adult is called upon to safeguard and guide. Granting the fact that the child's behavior shows this ceaseless exploratory activity, what problems does it present from the adult's point of view, and what obligations does it enjoin on the adult in his ministry to the needs of the child?

It cannot be denied that the child's activities are often inconvenient to the adult and dangerous to the child. As a result the adult has often attempted a negative sort of control, the *Don't* method of training, which seeks to control the child's activity by putting before it the barrier of a word. Later we shall discuss the methods called for by the child's tendency to meddle and to get into danger, but for the present we wish to register a caveat against a negative or obstructive method of control. It frustrates and represses the child, and instead of accomplishing its purpose merely sets up additional barricades which the child's ingenuity must exert itself to overcome. What is needed instead of obstructive methods is some plan by which the child's need for activity can be satisfied in legitimate ways.

Control Through the Environment.

The most adequate method of controlling the young child in the exploratory phase of his behavior is *positive* and *indirect.* It consists in regulating his physical environment in such a way that it is safe for him while at the same time it satisfies his appetite for activity.

Miss Johnson, in that section of *Children in the Nursery School* which is given as a reference at the end of this chapter, has discussed what the young child needs in his physical environment. These needs are met in the nursery school, but they should also be met in the home situation. Miss Johnson points out that a "suitable" environment is one which is favorable for growth, or in our terms, one which will satisfy the child's impulse and at the same time lead on to forms of activity which will be progressively satisfying to him and at the same time socially acceptable.

What Does the Child Need?

In answer to this question Miss Johnson posits three essentials:

Space—to climb as well as to move on the surface.
Material—especially those materials which have a variety of progressive uses.
Opportunity—particularly for the enrichment of sense experiences.

Let us consider these three in turn, still keeping in mind our fundamental problem of control.

Space.

In our earlier book we have emphasized the importance of giving the child a room of his own where he can retire, or be retired, as occasion warrants. Here his own belongings are assembled, and here he may be free to do as he likes. This provision for the individual needs of the child and for solitary play must devolve on the home. The nursery school emphasizes social participation and community of goods; the supplementary training which turns upon individual experience can perhaps be more readily given in the home situation. Problems of management are simplified when provision for the child's individual needs is made. His activity can be largely taken care of in his own quarters, and the rest of the household protected from his habitual presence and invasion.

In addition to indoor space, outdoor space is necessary. Both within and without there should be provision, as Miss Johnson suggests, not only for locomotion but for levitation. Yet how seldom do parents seek to minister to rather than to curb their children's passion for climbing. Any one who has watched children on a trapeze, a jungle gym or a ladder will realize what a sense of power they derive from the mastery of such apparatus. Such outdoor equipment can be bought for comparatively small cost or be homemade, while indoors a simple type of swing can be had to fit in a doorway, and a low ladder or series of steps will furnish endless diversion in climbing and jumping.

In providing for activity it is important that the means be of the sort that the child enjoys, not merely that which seems satisfactory to the parent. For example, many parents are gratified at the sight of their child sent out on parade with a smartly dressed nursemaid, but what may this involve from the point of view of the child? It is true he is getting exercise and fresh air, but he may be infinitely bored by the setting, and the exercise may be suitable for an adult but utterly unadapted to a child's more strenuous ways. Again, the experience may lack richness and variety of the kind that the child can assimilate. Actually the ragamuffin free to play on the streets may have access to a more stimulating, if more dangerous, environment than the child, well dressed and well watched, who is too constrained in the kind of environment to which he is exposed.

The same restrictions in the matter of dress may limit unduly a child's contacts with his environment. The child who is always clean and neat has been brought into conformity with adult standards at what is sure to be a heavy charge on his own personality. The contrast, for example, between a group of children playing in a park with their nurses ranged around gossiping and knitting while they keep a weather eye on their young charges, and another group of children of the same age playing in the nursery school, is sure to be in favor of the former as far as outward appearances go. The children in the nursery school are dressed for the wear and tear of strenuous play, and exposure to mud and dirt; they are often disheveled and untidy at the end of a morning in the playground. But if one looks, not on their appearance, but at their experience, it will be seen how much less restricted and more varied theirs has been, not aimless running or walking, but climbing, jumping, building, sliding, and all this with a minimum of restriction and adult surveillance, and that of a sort designed only to protect the child and not to prevent trouble for the person in charge as is often the case with nursemaids—or, shall we say, with parents.

Constructive Materials.

The literature on the subject of constructive play materials for children is growing so rapidly that it is difficult to keep pace with it. In the supplementary list of references are given some of the best sources of information in regard to play materials. Much is also being written, not only in the field of child study but in popular magazine articles, to emphasize the need of supplying children, not with complicated manufactured products but with raw materials from which they may create experience that will be of value in leading to a progressive knowledge of the world in which they are to live.

What should such materials offer for the child? First, opportunities for motor development. To learn to control one's own body is the first step on the ladder of power, and this the child may learn from a variety of material, the climbing apparatus suggested above and also locomotor toys of all sorts, wagons, kiddy cars.

Space and this type of motor apparatus takes care of one phase of the child's activity, but he is not content merely to be running about, climbing, and jumping. He wants to *make* things, hence the need of play materials which will both stimulate and satisfy the desire to construct. The findings of the study quoted above are also of significance here; that is, it is important to provide, not only for the more strenuous activities of the child, but also for his quieter moments, when he wishes to let down to the level of quiet play. Working in sand or plasticine, with a peg-board or puzzles, stringing beads, paper cutting, looking at picture books,—a variety of acceptable occupations can readily be found to alternate with more vigorous play. The adult's part is to make the materials for these accessible to the child in sufficient variety, and then to allow him to choose as his own need dictates.

Sense Experiences.

The third need, for a variety of sense experiences, is so strong that the child is bound to satisfy it with or without our coöperation. He may satisfy it surreptitiously by becoming a meddlesome, mischievous child, or he may satisfy it adequately, with enriched experience if we supply him with a variety of materials, colors, shapes, textures, and so forth, with which to experiment. The Montessori method of training children has been designed largely with the deliberate purpose of giving sensory training, but it is doubtful if it is necessary to break up the complexity of sight, sound, and touch which ordinarily function together in the detailed fashion this method prescribes, or to emphasize so sharply the didactic aspect of the training. Simple materials, used incidentally, may supply the child with a wide range of sensory experience. The wooden pallets which doctors use for depressing the tongue, dyed in a variety of bright colors, clothes pegs similarly colored, may be used for color impressions. The color of precious stones seems peculiarly attractive to children, as indeed to adults, and while one cannot supply these as play materials, to see them in shops or a museum affords one of the most stimulating experiences of color which the child can have. Bits of cloth of various textures will be treasured by the child, and will afford interesting touch comparisons. A nest of dolls or boxes or bowls which fit one within the other, help the child to recognize shapes and relative sizes. Innumerable suggestions of this sort present themselves. It is not expected that any home will transform itself into a collector's shop to supply all these; the suggestion is merely that in supplying materials for the child we should ask ourselves how far what we contemplate is likely to contribute to a pleasing and diversified sense experience on the part of the child. Having provided the means the child should then be left free to use it as his inner need dictates.

Language, music and rhythms afford still further examples of the child's experiments with sensory experiences. These subjects are somewhat specialized and are also complicated by the factor of social stimulation. They are admirably discussed from the point of view of the pre-school child in Miss Johnson's book. With respect of language there is usually an excess rather than a defect of stimulation for the child. With music it is otherwise. Probably nothing more enriches the experience of the child than habitually to hear good music. It is interesting to note how readily children respond to music when it is introduced incidentally in their experience. Young children should not be *required* to listen, but if the child shows interest in music when it occurs, parents should, without calling attention, note the child's responses, such as beating time, following the tune. The gramophone seems one of the most useful mechanical aids to musical education as children play records on it with great pleasure, often singing with the record.

The study of rhythmic movements in children is likewise in the experimental stage, but any one who has watched a group of children moving to music will have noted how susceptible they are to changes in rhythm, also how much individual difference there is in rhythmic sense. Opportunity for rhythmic movement is a special and highly significant form of the child's general impulse to activity. The early training of this impulse is likely to influence profoundly the later development of the child in regard to both grace and freedom of movement and of esthetic sensibility.

Protection Against Overstimulation.

While the parent should provide opportunities for play experience, it is equally important to safeguard against overstimulation. This may be done by providing materials for quiet play, books, table games, etc., so that the rhythm of rest and activity may be respected. Judgment should also be exercised in the sort of experience to which the child is subjected. Witness the illustration of the child of three taken to a musical comedy. Movies, pantomimes, and such forms of entertainment are better to be reserved for the later years of childhood, and even then indulged in only occasionally.

It will be noted, however, that most of the causes of overstimulation mentioned in the illustrations are caused by the presence of other children. When children meet regularly under constant conditions as in the nursery school the dangers of social overstimulation are reduced to a minimum. It is rather the occasional social contact under novel conditions, particularly with children who have not learned how to play with others, that occasions difficulty. Parties, in particular, are often orgies of unhealthy excitement for children, and adults, instead of regulating this, often fan the flame by the entertainment they provide and by their comments and exclamations. Not that the child should be denied parties, but that they should be limited in size, and simple in organization. Plenty of play materials to engage the activities of the children should be supplied, but novel and exciting forms of entertainment in which the children are onlookers, such as movies, Punch and Judy shows, etc., may well be omitted. Lastly, overstimulation by adult intervention should be avoided.

Opportunity for *withdrawal* by the child, whether at home or at school, is of the greatest value. We shall have occasion to return to this point later. Some of the illustrations show that parents appreciate this and allow for it in their regulation of the child's play. He should always be able to escape to solitary play when he finds the social situation too demanding.

Parents' Problems.

All that has been said may be accepted by parents, but they may still find themselves confronted by practical difficulties when it comes to carrying out such a plan of regulation by enriched opportunities for activity.

Teaching How to Play.

First, one meets the difficulty that providing materials does not teach the child *how* to play—that he needs direction and guidance in the use of such facilities. There are two answers to this. The first is that one of the most effective ways to teach a child to use materials is to let him see others using them. This is apparent again and again in the nursery school when a new child spends his first days watching the other children in their play. It would seem during this time as if the newcomer were purely passive, but after an interval, more or less prolonged, he will begin to do as the others do. He may dart suddenly to the slide, and having overcome his initial timidity he may spend days going up and down on that one piece of apparatus. The seemingly inactive period had been as real a part of the learning situation as was the overt action which followed on it. As far as possible this method of introducing a child to a new play situation through the suggestive behavior of other children should be followed. Where a nursery school does not supply the requisite social situation it can often be approximated by the formation of small play groups among children of approximately the same age. Some arrangement for supervision on the part of the mothers can make this a satisfactory complement for solitary play, and often relieves the pressure of work for the mothers who coöperate.

The child who fails to play when materials appropriate to his powers are provided may, in the second place, have been so directed and played with by adults that he has become accustomed to wait for them to act. He therefore lacks the initiative to carry out a play experiment on his own behalf. He demands that an adult play with him, or expects an audience for all his performances. In this case the withdrawal of the adult should not be too abrupt, but as quickly as possible the child should be accustomed to depending on himself in his play. It is vitally important that he should learn to depend on himself and not on outside stimulation in what he does.

Boredom in Play.

A second difficulty frequently mentioned by parents is that children quickly become tired of their toys and demand new ones. In the face of abundant play materials they may idle round listlessly, not caring to make any use of what has been provided for them. It is hard to credit this account in the face of the behavior of children in the nursery school who are so eagerly busy that no day seems long enough for the things that they wish to do. But there may be several faults of management which account for this difficulty.

The first is a lack of sufficient variety in play materials. The young child has a short span of attention, he tires readily of one activity and turns to look for something new. That something should be waiting for him. He will not be distracted by a variety of play materials provided he is left free to use them or not as he chooses. Distraction is introduced by adult interference rather than by the physical surroundings of the child. Parents often misunderstand, taking the child's flitting interest as evidence of an undesirable trend of personality, rather than as largely an age manifestation, or an indication of faulty training. If they realize that the desirable course is to provide the child with a fairly wide range of materials, and then to leave him alone to use them as he chooses, they will be less disposed to well-intentioned meddling, which often defeats the purpose which they have in mind, namely, the developing of the power of sustained attention in the child.

Again, the type of play material may explain the child's ennui. It may not chime with his interests at that particular time; if he is absorbed in mechanical construction it is useless to give a drawing book; or if a little girl's interests are centered in a dump truck and steam shovel it is useless to try to divert with more conventional playthings such as dolls. If the play is to have value it must be congruous with the interests and emotional needs of the child. Again, certain toys may demand a niceness of coördination, or a degree of concentrated attention of which the child is not yet capable, or which, if he does give it, will leave him exhausted and irritable after the play is over. Witness our later illustration of the child whose eyes were affected through his attempts to work fine color patterns. This was, of course, not defect but excess of interest on the part of this child. In general children outgrow types of toys as readily as they do their clothes.

Toys may, therefore, bore the child because they are too hard, or because they are too easy. Mechanical toys come under the latter designation. The bucking donkey sends the child into shrieks at first, but the novelty of the animal's performance soon wears off and as all the demand it makes on its owner is the turning of a key, the child soon loses interest. Constructive materials, on the other hand, blocks large and small, wood that can be sawed and nailed, continue to hold the attention of girls as well as boys because so much is demanded of the child in the way both of imaginative and manipulative effort.

Again, boredom on the child's part may be simply the reflection of too much adult attention. He may desert his play because he has been accustomed to the stimulation of his parent's constant presence. Here again, for reasons to be discussed more fully later, it is of the greatest importance to wean the child away from that sort of dependence and to accustom him to relying on himself in play. If he finds that he cannot have his mother he will probably go back to his blocks.

Putting Away Toys.

This subject is one of the unfailing bugbears of parents in training small children. It occasions many pitched battles between parent and child and rebellion in the child with emotional tension and a feeling of annoyance and frustration on the part of the parent are not infrequent concomitants.

This seems a good place to try out a type of control based on insight, a definite plan of action and satisfaction of the child's needs.

First, then, let us ask *why* the child does not want to put away his toys. Conceivably for the same reason that we do not answer our letters, make up our accounts or keep our bureau drawers in order. It is a bother to do so; tidiness is a social virtue—an end acquired after much pains and certainly not a primitive impulse. Yet this is one point where the freedom of the play impulse would seem to call for regulation and training.

It is plain also that in many cases the putting away of toys is not the simple matter of the child's complying with adult wishes; it has been erected into a test of wills by bad handling of early situations. It thus becomes an anticipated battle ground in which the child tries out his persistence against that of the parent. The child usually gauges accurately the parent's resistance, as in the case of one little girl who was heard to mutter, "I'll pick up one block, and she'll do the rest." It is highly important that such a situation should not be allowed to arise, where the child consciously tries to get control over the adult, for its effect on general discipline is bound to be unhealthy, and radiate to other settings.

What, then, should be our plan? First, not to allow ourselves to become emotional over the situation. What does it matter that the child storms and protests so long as his behavior does not cause the parent to lose control of herself and therefore of the situation?

Secondly, the picking up of toys should be treated as a learning situation. There should be proper and easily accessible places for putting the toys away, the child should be shown where and how to put them, and he should be helped in doing so. Patience must be shown with his fumbling efforts and slow pace as well as firmness in seeing that the work is actually accomplished. No new worth-while accomplishment can be acquired quickly, and the process is doubly hard when it does not make any special appeal to the child's natural interest.

As regards satisfaction, the parent should be content at first if she can avoid emotional conflicts and secure some amount of pleasant coöperation from her child. Rewards are taboo since they usually only complicate the issue. By degrees the child should begin to take a pride in his accomplishment if he puts his possessions in order. He may also learn to rationalize the matter like the little boy who, on being called to get up in the morning, answered: "Mamma, I must first put all my blocks back in their box. You wouldn't like me to be an untidy child."

It may seem that undue emphasis is being put on a trivial point, but it is just such situations which are pregnant with friction in the family. A tidy room may not greatly matter, but nagging between parent and child certainly does. We should plan to avoid both things and to train the child in habits of order which will be serviceable in later life. In the details of living, the process means more than the product.

Control of the Environment.

If the child is controlled so that there is a good adjustment of the physical environment to his needs and capacities, he, in turn, learns control as he exercises his activities upon the material placed at his disposal. It is important in thinking of control to keep in mind that our object is the self-discipline, self-regulation and growth of the individual. There is always the danger that adults acting on behalf of the child will extend their activities beyond the point where they are necessary. When this happens the child is denied that development which can come only through free exercise of his powers. There are certain reasons why the physical environment offers a particularly favorable field for such development.

To begin with, it challenges the child to the exercise of his powers. Motor development is facilitated by active play. Such development not only conduces to health but has a marked influence on the whole personality. Miss Johnson comments on this with her usual astuteness:

> "Whether or not we find that children need positive corrective procedure, we regard the free and experimental use and control of their bodies as the first desideratum of mental health. . . . The child who stumbles when he runs; who can run alone but who cannot manage a wagon as he runs; who has to make climbing over obstacles a deliberate, not an automatic process; who has not elaborated such simple playground activities as sliding, swinging and using a seesaw; finds himself at a disadvantage in a group. His constant effort is to compensate for his deficiencies." *

Besides laying the foundation for a poised, self-reliant personality through opportunities for motor development, the constructive capacities of the child are called out by the kind of material which we give him to work with. This implies not only the development of skill in the manipulation of materials but imagination and invention in their uses. Any one who has watched what a group of children can do with a pile of blocks or a couple of old packing cases—turning the most unlikely materials into boats, castles, and so on, will recognize how physical properties are absorbed into the creative processes of the mind. Similarly the foundation of the arts lies in the delicacy and depth of the sense perceptions with their accompanying emotional shadings.

The Impulse to Mastery.

There exists in most of us the impulse to master that which we encounter whether in the world of persons or of things. Such an impulse is a sign of mental health; if it is stifled and unsatisfied the child feels inferior and shrinks from the situations he is called on to face instead of meeting them readily and effectively. Now there are many situations in the experience of the young child when he obviously must submit to authority. We have already pointed out the great importance of play as affording relief from the regimentation inherent in the child's daily routine. On the other hand, if the child is allowed to dominate the adults with whom he lives he learns a spurious kind of control which is hostile to the building up of genuine control from within. It is necessary therefore to look for opportunities in which his will-power can express itself without damage to himself and without endangering his relations to others. The physical environment is admirably suited to meet this need.

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* Johnson, Harriet M., *Children in the Nursery School,* John Day Co., New York, 1928, pp. 6-7.

It is simpler to regulate and to understand than is the social environment. Blocks do not answer back, at least, not as children do. One escapes the circular responses which characterize social relations. If the child attempts a task beyond his powers and fails to achieve it he may burst into tears, and thrash out at the material with which he works. But there is no answering emotional storm to augment the tension of the situation. This, by the way, is a point which parents fail to realize when they teach the child to blame the floor on which he bumps his head or the chair from which he falls. "Bad chair," "naughty floor," introduce a quite incongruous note in the situation and destroy the very virtue of physical objects, their imperturbability. The important thing for the child to learn is that while *he* may be hurt *they* are unchanged.

This fact of unvarying response from the physical environment is thus one of the most important disciplinary experiences in the life of the young child. It is important just because it is independent of social interference and therefore free from social caprice. Children are adventurers in a world whose properties they but slightly understand. They must be protected against a too sudden and drastic contact with the sharp corners of experience, but the sooner they learn that blocks if built too high will topple over, that the ground is hard if you fall on it, that effort and persistence are necessary to drive a nail or saw a board, the more just appreciation will they have of forces to be met and mastered in all stages of life. They thus learn both to depend on and to respect their physical environment, because the element of stability in the reactions of the physical world is present in all types of such experience.

It is, of course, the place of the adult to see that situations are neither too hard nor too easy for the child. He must not be made blasé nor yet must he be discouraged in the exercise of his powers. But, granting this and a modicum of safety in respect of untried forms of activity, he should be left alone in this realm with freedom and opportunity to work out his own salvation.

OUTLINE IV

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTIVITY

I. The Child's Need of Activity:
  Reflex and random movements in the infant.
  Development of directed activity—selection from the whole on behalf of a part,
    —learning motor coordination.

II. Regulating Activity Through the Physical Environment:
  Physical surroundings should supply
    —space, indoor and outdoor,
    —materials with a variety of constructive uses,
    —opportunity for sense experience.

III. Parents' Problems in Regulating Environment:
  Child who does not know *how* to play
    —protection from dangerous pursuits,
    —too much dependence on adults,
    —need of example of other children.
  Child who is bored with his playthings
    —insufficient variety,
    —wrong kinds—mechanical toys,
      —too complicated toys,
    —dependence on adult stimulation.
  Refusal to take care of toys
    —a learning situation involving
      —a place for toys,
      —help in putting away,
      —persistence and patience in adult.
    —emotional complications to be avoided
      —nagging by adult,
      —child getting upper hand.

IV. References:
  Johnson, Harriet M.—*Children in the Nursery School,* pp. 65-80, 168-230.

Mitchell, Harriet—*Play and Play Materials for the Pre-School Child.*

V. Questions:
  1. What would you do with a child who refuses to play outside alone?
  2. How should one deal with a child who plays meticulously and with such concentration that she becomes exhausted and irritable?

ILLUSTRATIONS IV

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTIVITY

1. *Activity or Naughtiness?*

"My difficulty is that one can establish a régime that goes beautifully when the mother is there, but when she is away there is trouble. Whether there is something in suppressed desire according to Freud I do not know, but certainly in the last six months whenever I leave my child he just seems to burst out. On one occasion I left him with a fairly competent woman, and he tore into the kitchen and opened the gas taps. Then while she was closing them he went to the bathroom and turned on the water there. It kept her busy stopping all the things that he had been forbidden to do and some that weren't forbidden."

Question: Is this more than mischief in an active child of six who lacks companions of his own age? Is it likely that the discipline is at fault?

"My child breaks windows willfully. He did it more to hear the noise at first, I guess, but now he is a decidedly destructive child. I have a younger and an older one and they are much more careful than he is. I think he just likes to see it break and hear the smash. He was spanked, but it does not stop him. He is just two and a half.

"I think he is simply full of life. He enjoys tearing things up. I suppose he simply forgets he has been spanked for it. I think, though, he does it more in spite. I am quite sure it is willful. He just laughs even though he is punished hard."

"I was on night work during the War, and came home after twelve hours' work to find the kitchen swimming in water. The children had come down in their nightgowns to do it. They were marooned on chairs. I can tell you I 'marooned' them. It was Robinson Crusoe, they had seen it at the show."

Leader: "If they had played this in the back yard you would have thought it clever or funny. Children do not always recognize differences in time or place. That is what we have to teach them, when it is proper to do a thing and when not, when they may play certain games and when not. But see what a high degree of imaginative insight this game showed."

II. *Parental Attitudes.*

"I have an especially active daughter who will be five next month. I thought that perhaps in these groups I could find *some way of taming her a little.*"

"I find my children are very different. Two are adventurous and two are timid. The boys are terrible. The neighbors are always phoning to ask if we had noticed that the boys were on somebody's roof, or walking along the eavestrough or climbing trees, or what not. My husband says that there is nothing we can do. He comforts me by saying that he never heard of a child being killed through climbing. And he insists that no matter what they do I must never let them know I am afraid. The boy who is most venturesome belongs to the Y.M.C.A., the Scouts, in fact all the activities I can find for him. I don't think any woman ever had such a boy as mine. I have never seen a child get into such dangerous situations. He has broken his shoulder and collar bone, and injured his foot so that he has had to have an operation, but it does not seem to make the slightest difference to his activities."

"Billy has a playroom in which he also sleeps. When he has another child there he pulls out everything in his anxiety to entertain the other child. What should I do? You say there should be a room with no 'Don'ts' but *I greatly dislike the confusion.*"

"I insisted upon my child picking up his toys in the garden. Then the maid started to teach him to hang up his clothes. After he had learned how he just didn't do anything. I began insisting and it seemed that I heard my own voice from morning to night. Then I started helping him. I pick up far more than he does, but he thinks that he is doing it. He is really making an attempt."

III. *Causes of Overstimulation in Play.*

"When my little girl plays for any length of time she gets excited. If I am out and a neighbor's child comes to play, and they are together for an hour or so I find her in a terrible state when I come home. This does not occur with all her playmates but with two or three."

"I find that when my girl of four plays with one particular child she becomes boisterous and difficult. She is no longer amenable to the usual methods of control. This particular child is kept under a very strict régime, and when she has a chance with another child she is apt to become almost hysterical in the novel situation. Then her behavior is reflected in my child."

"My boy of five is very excitable. I took him to the Santa Claus parade, and he was so worked up that he could not stand still. When he hears music he goes quite white. He says, 'Oh, Mother, I love it!' but he turns quite pale."

"I took my little girl of three to a musical comedy. She loved it so that I took her again to one that I thought was suitable for her. This time she was restless and bored, and slapped me in the face, to my great chagrin. I was only trying to entertain her."

Question: What sort of entertainment should one provide for a child of this age?

"My child is nine and I often take her to a picture show. She does get tired but she looks forward to it and expects to go. She nags for it. It is not just that she wants to go to a movie, but she expects to do something special every Saturday."

"My two children went last winter to a party where they were kept up later than usual, and where they played very exciting games with a large group of girls and boys. The older child, who is well and strong, fell asleep in the car on the way home, but beyond being overtired she was none the worse for the outing. The little one was thoroughly upset by the play and the rich and unaccustomed food, and was in bed for a couple of days. It happened that I had refused an invitation to a sleighing party for her on account of this earlier engagement. I did wish that it had been to the jolly, wholesome, outdoor party that she had gone."

IV. *Protecting the Child from Fatigue.*

"My twins were born when my oldest child was two. As they grew they overstimulated one another. When things seemed to me to be getting too exciting I used to ask one child to go off and play by herself. This was not intended nor understood as a punishment."

"My eldest boy is not so robust as the others. When he was little he used to have his breakfast in bed. I had a little table specially made for him with chintz pockets for his toys. He had breakfast on the table and played till he was allowed to get up. This table was never used except when the child was resting, and to have it was a treat."

"When my child gets beyond living with I put him to bed. He is usually glad to go as he is exhausted. I read to him and amuse him. A morning in bed will usually put him right."

Question: Are there any dangers in this procedure?

"Often a complete change of occupation will rest and refresh the child. I try to keep two or three games that are only brought out in emergencies so they do not lose their appeal. This generally gives a jaded child a fresh start."

"Vigorous outdoor play that induces muscular tiredness will often do away with mental fatigue or boredom. On rainy days I try to have my children play on a porch, and I like to be sure that they are thoroughly tired physically before they are put to bed."

V. *Teaching the Child to Play.*

"You need to teach children to play sometimes. They don't get the interest in a toy unless you show them what to do with it. They often do not see the things we do. If you show them it interests them, for instance, those building blocks that fit inside each other. One should show the child how they fit. He might find out himself, but it would take longer. Perhaps it might be better to let him do it for himself."

"Children ought sometimes to play quietly. When we are training our children we must remember that they are living in a world where there are other people, and I believe that they may as well learn early that others have rights too. I think it is just as important to learn these limits as it is to learn fun. It is necessary to learn to play quietly at times. You may want a child to be individual, but I don't think it is inhibiting his personality when you teach him that there are times and places for things."

"After being out for a walk my little boy of four and a half came back to his toys and built out of blocks and cans a gasoline tank, and what he calls a 'roller-bender-binder.' He saw them rolling the road in preparation for the top pavement, and I think he tried to create or reproduce that."

"My two children made a garage with large blocks around their tricycle and another around the kiddy car. They repeat this play each day."

"Does training a child to put his toys away not interrupt his concentration? I tried to do that to prevent too many toys being taken out and destroyed, but I wondered if this wasn't a distraction."

"My child had a toy given him which proved to be a failure. He nearly went blind trying to fit tiny colored squares into patterns. His eyes got so that they wouldn't focus."

CHAPTER V

CONSTRUCTIVE AND DESTRUCTIVE TENDENCIES

Before we apply these terms to the behavior of young children it is well to stop and ask ourselves how far such a classification is valid or how far it reflects only an adult attitude in regard to the doings of children. Certainly much of what we commonly designate as destructive is so only from an adult point of view. Thus the child scribbles on the walls of a room and we say that he has destroyed the wall-paper; he cuts the dresser scarf or his clothes, and we say that he has ruined a good piece of material. But if he writes on the blackboard or makes paper cut-outs we approve his activities and say that he is learning to make things. Only their social implications distinguish one act from the other. Now obviously education consists largely in the development of awareness of the social implications of our acts, but such awareness has to be learned by degrees. It does not exist in the very young child, at least not in respect of the acts we are discussing. Even the older child who, we say, ought to know better, seems to be conscious of social inhibitions only spasmodically. Few children deliberately destroy things; as a rule their zest for activity carries them along irresistibly. It is only after the act that they may realize the consequences.

The Real Difference.

Shall we then conclude that *for the child* no difference exists between constructive and destructive activity? Such a conclusion would be rash, and, in fact, any one who has watched attentively the play of children must have been impressed by a rather clearly marked distinction between two types of activity. The child builds up an elaborate structure of blocks with the greatest care. But, when it is completed, he seems to get as much satisfaction in knocking it down as he did in building it. He usually makes this clear by his comments. "See the tower that I have built. Now watch me knock it down. Bang!" with great éclat as the blocks scatter over the floor. There seems here to be a real distinction for him between construction and destruction.

Miss Wagoner, writing on the Constructive Ability of Young Children,* comments on the same tendency in another form, namely the readiness of the child to dismember and his inability to construct a pattern:

> "The youngest children, those under three, merely placed the marbles at random with no notion of pattern or construction; their performance was simply manipulation of the material. These children found it easier and more interesting to put the marbles back into the boxes than to make patterns, and, without being told, they put each color in its proper box. Analogous situations appear often in children's play, that is, the breaking up of a whole into its parts, destructive play, is simpler than constructive, the building up of a complex whole out of many parts."

Why Do Children Destroy?

This quotation indicates one reason for the destructive impulse, that it is *easier than construction.* Any one who has ripped up a dress and then tried to put it together again, or taken a complicated machine apart and tried to assemble it will corroborate the truth of this statement. There is probably another reason, illustrated in the knocking over of the tower, that is, one gets a maximum of effect for a minimum of effort. The child's desire to "start something" is satisfied. He *increases his sense of power* and at the same time calls attention to himself in a dramatic way as the source of the action:

A third possibility is that destruction affords *relief* from the exigencies of the situation. We recognize this in the common phenomenon of the angry child kicking his toys about, or of the frustrated child embarking on willful destruction of the property of others. But it may be present in less extreme forms in normal play, such as the sort we have cited. A prolonged piece of constructive work puts the young child under a strain which we as adults find hard to realize. His activities must be restricted within a definite course if he is to make the nice adjustments required, let us say, to build a high tower in which each block must be set evenly on the one below if the whole structure is not to collapse. Again, if he is engaged on some building with social meaning, such as a garage or railway station or house, the far-fetched effort of making his crude structure realize the conception which he has in mind may be considerable. To knock down what he has thus built appears to afford relief from the strain of creation. Through gross bodily activity it releases those pent-up energies of the child which for the time being had been suppressed in the interest of the finer motor coördinations. From this standpoint the so-called destructive phase is a relapse into more primitive modes of activity, a turning back for the time being of the child's energies from fine discriminations to less differentiated modes of response such as we discussed in the previous chapter. He has been under the constraint of ends, his behavior now reverts for the time to the easier level of impulsive action. It should be recognized that this sort of rhythmic alternation in response is characteristic in one form or another of all human functions, in other words is fundamental in the life process.

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* Wagoner, Lovisa C., "The Constructive Abilities of Young Children," *Iowa Studies in Child Welfare,* Volume III, Number 2, 1925, p. 34.

Such rhythmic adjustment holds with the adult as well as with the child. The person who has been engaged for a period at some exacting work is almost sure to show a reaction to a markedly lower and less restrained level of behavior once the demands of the situation have been met. We allow for this relief from tension officially by festivals and holidays; but the destructive character of some such reactions is recognized in slang parlance as "going on the bust."

Fourthly, destructiveness may be an expression of revolt against a too repressive discipline. If we find a child indulging in wanton destruction especially where real damage is done to objects which he or others prize it is well to examine the social situation to discover what stresses may account for such an outbreak. Several cases in the Illustrations seem to be of this sort. It is not always easy, especially with the lack of detail of instances given in a group meeting, to unravel the underlying causes. We are familiar with one case, however, where a child of three, ordinarily well-adjusted, went out and broke off all the plants in a garden which her grandmother had been tending with great care. There was no indication of deliberate malice, but there certainly was a strained domestic situation at the time in which both mother and grandmother were involved, and the child's destructiveness may well have been an obscure reflection of this tension.

Many cases are probably of this sort, that is, the child is himself unaware of why he acts as he does; intentional and malicious destruction may sometimes occur with older children but it is unusual with children under school age. It is because the motivation is unconscious that parents are so baffled by destructiveness of this type when it occurs.

Stages of Constructive Activity.

Turning from destructive to constructive activity, what place has the latter in child life? From the point of view we are endeavoring to present it is possible to grade the behavior of the young child according to the levels of complexity in the activity which he displays. Looked at in this way, destructive and constructive activity belong together in a single scale of action, with the former at the bottom of the scale. This conception may be elaborated in steps:

(a) *Aimless Movements:* What we have previously described as destructive activity might perhaps be more accurately called aimless activity. If it is used as relief from strain the child himself is not fully conscious of this as a motive. It is mere action with a minimum of form imposed, and so belongs to the impulsive end of a scale of motivation. It is a sort of recrudescence of the random movements of infancy, expressing like them some release of energy occasioned more from within the organism than called forth by selective environmental factors.

(b) *Manipulation:* This, on the other hand, represents a stage of activity in which the child is preoccupied with exploring the sense properties of his environment. He is acquiring the stock-in-trade out of which to manufacture his world, learning to see, taste, hear, and handle. Thorndike comments on this stage: *

> "Attention to novel objects and human behavior, cautious approach, following with the eyes, reaching, grasping, putting it in the mouth, tasting, visual exploration, and manipulation thus make up a large part of 'curiosity.' "

This manipulative stage begins in babyhood, but is still characteristic of the two-year-old who uses the freedom of locomotion which he has so lately gained as opportunity for extensive explorations of his environment. Manipulation takes many forms with young children in a nursery school. The younger ones will frequently spend long periods in pouring beans or sand from one utensil to another. They play with a peg-board but with little sense of pattern; they are interested in putting the pegs in the holes and pulling them out again, the latter being as satisfying as the former. A child in the workshop will drive nails, but instead of leaving them to form a pattern he will frequently pull them out, so that at the end of the period, although he has hammered pretty steadily he may have only one or two nails in place. Certain kinds of apparatus such as swings and slides lend themselves to this relatively low level of activity wherein the child is satisfied with the mere repetition of a sensation which is pleasurable but monotonous, and which calls forth very little formative activity on his part for its production.

Such manipulative and sensory plays are highly characteristic of the two-year-age level. Thus a child of this age will usually sit on a swing for as long as any one will push her. She has no interest in doing anything special but seems to be satisfied with the sensations which she derives from such experience. To urge her to swing herself or another child, or to engage in some more active pursuit may be, therefore, a mistake. She may be sufficiently absorbed in the novel sensations of the moment. As she grows older she begins to develop resistance to help, refusing offers of swings from other children and preferring to manage herself—or them, rather than to be the passive recipient in a situation. When she wishes to swing rather than be swung her behavior has advanced to a higher level of function.

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* Thorndike, Edward L., *Educational Psychology, Briefer Course,* Teachers College, 1921, pp. 63-64.

(c) *Construction:* We may describe this newly emerging tendency as the constructive level of activity. This phase seems to appear some time in the third year with most children though there is a considerable range of individual difference, it being earlier in some cases and later in others. With children who are definitely feeble-minded this stage is, of course, long deferred, or may never be arrived at. On the other hand, one child in our nursery school was observed to build persistently with blocks, erecting complicated and symmetrical structures before he was three years of age. His skill and sustained attention were in sharp contrast with the behavior of other two-year-olds, who were restless, flitting from one occupation to another, engaged in that sampling of the environment which was described under our previous category.

With the constructive period proper some idea of pattern, design, use, enters into the child's activity. This may be of a rudimentary sort, as, for instance, the threading of beads on a string. But an activity of this sort which at first sight seems little removed from manipulation, soon takes on complexity and variety of form. Thus the beads which at first had only a random placing come to be strung with regard for shape and color. Similarly the peg-board, used previously in the manner described, is now spontaneously used for working out patterns in which both color and design play a part. Blocks are not merely carried to and fro; they are built into meaningful structures. Wagons are used to fetch and carry. Certain toys such as the tinker builder, of which the child had used the parts formerly, throwing or rolling them about the floor, are now assembled in definite patterns. Interest in form, symmetry, design, seems to characterize the third and fourth years of a child's life. Of course, it does not stop then but continues through life, being an integral factor not merely in art but in an ordered manner of living. It seems reasonable to believe that the later uses which we make of the constructive tendency may be influenced by the bent which it receives in these early experiences.

It should be noted in this connection that constructiveness may mask itself in what at first sight seems like a revival of the tendency to destroy, that is the impulse to take things apart. This assails all children at some stage of their careers. Clocks, for instance, seem favorite objects for dismemberment; the child's curiosity being aroused to know what makes them strike or run. Dolls, again, may be cut up to see what they are made of, to find out how their eyes move. This is really the constructive impulse in an analytical phase. To know how a thing is put together is a necessary part of understanding or making it; the child who takes some complicated machine to pieces to find out its workings is really aspiring to build, not to destroy. He is often naïvely surprised and distressed if not disillusioned at the results of his investigation. To punish children because they have inadvertently rendered valueless something of value is altogether to blur the meaning of the incident. The rationale of such control being presumably to prevent the child repeating these acts, would destroy ends of greater value. The child's constructive impulse needs to be nurtured, even at the expense of our possessions. Safeguard, if possible, but do not let the more vital need of the child be starved in our anxiety to protect materials which, after all, take their value only in terms of what they contribute to human development. To supply the child with discarded pieces of mechanism which he may dismember may be a useful compromise with this interest.

(d) *Social Uses:* A new motive enters in to modify the child's activities as he reaches the upper level of the preschool period, that is interest in the social uses of his materials and activities. When he merely constructs his interest is limited by the activity itself. He is content to knock down the house that he has built, to pull the design apart when he is finished with his play. But when he begins to perceive a use for his constructions beyond the activity of the moment, he will wish to preserve his work; a new stage has been reached. A striking manifestation of the force of this factor of social use may be seen at nursery schools in connection with the building of homemade toys by children. In many schools children are provided with a carpenter's bench, some materials and tools, and allowed to build as fancy seizes them. We have tried, on the contrary, teaching children to build; carrying their training through a definite progression of necessary operations, sawing, nailing, joining, etc., and then of making simple things. The insistence with which children attach social uses even to their simplest constructs is astonishing. Thus the child who is learning to drive nails and completes the formal exercise of driving a circle of them part way into a square of wood sees his handiwork as a "tea-pot stand" for mother which he further embellishes and takes proudly home.

This simple operation illustrates nicely the progression of activity which we have been describing. The child's manipulative interest in the hammer and nails is taken up into the interest of a pattern or design of a simple sort, and to this is added the further motivation of social purpose, of making something of permanent value and use. "This is not a circle, it's my tea-pot stand," one child was heard to remark, showing not only the progression we allude to but the equally important identification of the worker's personality with his work which enters at this higher level of construction for social use. It is important to notice, as this illustration shows clearly, that one phase of activity is not superseded when another emerges, rather it is taken up by the new one and given a new form. This does not mean greater complexity for the child so much as a drawing of elements together into a new and easier form which embodies and unifies all the old factors. The point of Lloyd Morgan's theory of Emergent Evolution or of the principles of the Gestalt Psychology can readily be seen in the tea-pot stand.

To take another example: The house of blocks that used to be broken down so jubilantly may now be safeguarded with the greatest care. Many a mother has approached what seemed to her a mere conglomeration of blocks to be told that it was the doll's house or the car's garage, and that it must not be disturbed at any cost. The child who has been content to fondle a doll or to wheel one up and down in a carriage may now launch on a host of complicated activities. The dolls must be fed, undressed, put to bed, taken for an airing. They fall ill and go to the hospital. Recently a small girl was observed to put a sewing machine needle in her doll's mouth. She held it there for some time, took it out, looked at it closely, shook it down, and announced that the doll's temperature was "normal." This was, of course, simply an adaptation of materials to use such as she had seen on occasion, but a year previously she would not have been motivated to behave in this way. What law of growth is operative we do not know, but it can be said that she had reached the age when a response to the social implications of her surroundings was becoming the characteristic feature of her play.

"Helping mother" is another manifestation of this phase of development. The child becomes interested in the activities of the household and is eager to reproduce them in her play, or, better still, to share in them as an active participant. She wishes to sweep, to wash dishes, to bake, and should be encouraged to do these things within the limit of her capacity. Mothers cannot wisely entrust the direction of children's work to maids. In an urban household it is perhaps easier to find appropriate "helping" opportunities for girls than for boys, but it is the duty of both parents to discover in the operation of their home those activities with social uses in which the children can best share. The impulse to do something serviceable, to join in "bees," etc., is practically universal at this period; parents should take advantage of it in order to initiate the child into the simpler tasks of the household before other wider interests intervene and make this a less easy undertaking.

There is more than imitation in these pursuits; they involve a definite response to the social situation, and with this a growing conception of purpose and use in respect of materials. It will be recognized that in discussing the social complexion of these activities we are not referring to social play, but merely to the social meanings which color the child's use of the materials around him.

This scheme is not offered as an exhaustive or accurate analysis of the child's use of materials, but rather as a broad scheme indicative of the general lines which a child's development follows. It is necessary to analyze each part in detail by means of carefully controlled observations before we shall be in a position to speak convincingly of the evolution of the constructive impulse in young children. Experimental studies such as those of Miss Wagoner to which we have already referred are few, so that there are many gaps in our knowledge. Meanwhile, parents are faced with the practical problem of managing the abundant and often vagrant impulses of their children. We have therefore outlined this tentative scheme to which our discussion of control could be related.

Control by Supply.

In the preceding chapter we stressed one of the basic principles of control, that is, by supplying the child with the materials which he needs to ensure a full development of his powers. If now our scale of constructive activities is accepted as an approximate picture of the child's developmental progress, it should be easy for intelligent parents to decide what materials are appropriate to the child at the various stages. The detailed discussion of these points would be out of place here. The references on the outline, and the more detailed list at the end of this book * may be consulted for practical suggestions in regard to play materials for children. More helpful than any printed list is a close watching of your child's interests in order to supply those materials which the child seems to crave. It is useless to give a carpenter set if your boy has set his heart on a tricycle, or a doll if your daughter has set her heart on a steam shovel. As long as one meets the general condition that the toys bought are ones which allow of a variety and progression of uses, that they are stoutly constructed for hard wear, then the interest of the child would seem to be the proper guide. Here, as in so many phases of child management, we have to remind ourselves that "hands off" is a sound policy. We should be content to stay in the background and meet the child's needs as they arise. We should not be always prodding, suggesting, showing the child a new thing to do or a better way to do what he is doing. In this fashion we simply rob the child of the training which is inherent in doing things for oneself. The thing done is less important than the doing, and even the *how* is less important than that the child should do it for himself.

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* See Bibliography, pp. 343-6.

By leaving the child to pursue uninterruptedly his constructive impulses we also allow him to develop his power of concentration. It is a common experience for any child study leader to be assailed by the question: "How can I teach my child to concentrate?" As far as we know one can do little in a direct way to teach concentration. Certainly to try to accomplish this by telling would be as futile between parent and child as between leader and parents. But one can allow the pre-school child to *learn* the habit of attention by carefully refraining from needless interruption of his pursuits. Watch the absorbed interest of a small child in something he is trying to do or make and you see concentrated attention par excellence. If we do not break in on him without good cause, if we see to it that he has plenty of objects on which he wishes to work with undivided attention, the chances are that he will form a habit of concentration which will carry over into other activities as he grows older. We should remember that concentration is not some inborn trait which we have or haven't, nor is it some sort of legerdemain; it is simply the habit of attending to one thing and neglecting others in our surroundings,—the power to select, plus good judgment as to what to select and when. It is an habitual way of reacting to the environment which depends not on any special recipe for its cultivation but mainly on doing it over and over again. What the parent should do is implement the conditions that facilitate such learning on the part of the child. To have materials that are inherently of interest is a first requirement, which leads naturally to the second, which is action—for learning is by doing. This dependence of concentration upon action has been emphasized by Professor Dewey: *

> "Intellectual organization originates and for a time grows as accompaniment of the organization of the acts required to realize an end, not as the result of a direct appeal to thinking power. . . . All people at the outset, and the majority of people probably all their lives, attain ordering of thought through ordering of action."

Principles of Control.

Assuming the foregoing description of the constructive impulse at its various levels, what are the implications for the practice of parents? We shall touch on some half dozen of the more outstanding ones.

Satisfying the Child's Need for Activity.

The importance of supplying appropriate outlets for the child's activity has perhaps been sufficiently discussed. The old adage about Satan finding mischief for idle hands is one of the few maxims of child training which the present generation of parents will accept without qualification. We no longer expect the young child to be "good" in the sense of being inactive. When he goes to church, instead of sitting through a long service designed for adults, he attends his own church kindergarten; when he goes to school he is not, or at least should not be, required to sit for long periods at a desk. In social life new consideration is also shown for the child. Many grown-ups may recall how in their tender years they used to be taken "calling" with their mothers. On these occasions they were expected to sit with folded hands while the adults carried on interminable conversations, often mystifying, and sometimes unsuitable or unprofitable for children. Nowadays we do not take children visiting, but if we are so misguided we probably are soon reminded that they have not the old-fashioned grace of keeping quiet and sitting still. A mother reported that she had taken her four-year-old son with her on a sick visit. He was amenable for the first five minutes, then he whispered to her, "I want to have fun." The request for "fun" was repeated with growing insistence and vigor till the call ended abruptly by a hasty retreat of the mother with her fun-loving child. When and how children should learn some sort of social inhibition is a question which parents have to face, but the tendency away from artificial and repressive training towards provision for activity is a sane one.

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* Dewey, John, *How We Think,* D. C. Heath and Company, New York, 1910, p. 41.

Jacob Abbott, in that excellent book to which we have already referred, has written with insight on this point: *

> "You may stop the supply of force, if you will, by refusing to give them food; but if you continue the supply, you must not complain of its manifesting itself in action. . . . To give children food and then to restrain the resulting activity, is conduct very analogous to that of the engineer who should lock the action of his engine, turn all the stop-cocks, and shut down the safety valve, while he still went on all the time putting in coal under the boiler. The least that he could expect would be a great hissing and fizzling at all the joints of his machine; and it would be only by means of such a degree of looseness in the joints as would allow of the escape of the imprisoned force in this way that could prevent the repression ending in a frightful catastrophe.
>
> "Now, nine-tenths of the whispering and playing of children in school, and of the noise, the rudeness, and the petty mischief of children at home, is just this hissing and fizzling of an imprisoned power, and nothing more.
>
> "In a word, we must favor and promote, by every means in our power, the activity of children, not censure and repress it. We may endeavor to turn it aside from wrong channels—that is, to prevent its manifesting itself in ways injurious to them or annoying to others. We must not, however, attempt to divert it from these channels by damming it up, but by opening other channels that will draw it away in better directions."

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* *Gentle Measures,* pp. 192-193.

It is interesting to remind ourselves that this was written in 1872, in the vogue of Victorian principles of conduct and training.

Teaching the Use of Possessions.

The use and care of possessions are important parts of the social discipline in managing the activity of the young child. Many mothers complain of the destructive proclivities of their children; they pull leaves off ferns, break dishes, and are generally a nuisance in the sphere of adult possessions. If we examine these cases it will be seen that they have seldom been treated as *learning* situations. The child has been punished for touching, or "don't" has been resorted to as a check on his meddling. He has not been shown treasured objects, allowed to handle and examine them under guidance, and had their uses explained to him. Our later illustration of the mother who taught her child to handle the valued china in the cabinet is an example of a constructive parental attitude in such a situation. Her experience is confirmed by that of many mothers who follow the policy of teaching their children the use of objects instead of merely forbidding them. Of course, accidents will happen, but parents should learn to meet these with equanimity, looking less on the damage done than to the child's intention and emotional reaction. This is part of the price of having children to train. Even the most rigid prohibitions will not safeguard against disaster; to forbid a child to touch certain things exerts a fascination as compelling to-day as it was with Eve in Eden. Even punishment may not deter, as witness our illustration of the mother who slapped her child's hands on five different occasions without avail for pulling leaves off her fern.

Ownership might have been used in this case as an incentive to care. If the child had been given a fern of his own and taught how to care for it, he would probably soon have lost any desire to destroy plants. Such a result, however, will not happen unless the child is definitely supervised in the sort of care that is required. He cannot be expected of his own accord to know what to do and when to do it. He is sure to forget, and the parent who undertakes training must take the responsibility of seeing that the child is reminded and helped in what he has to do. In the nursery school flowers in the house and garden are planted and cared for by the children. To water the plants is a coveted privilege. Pets are also kept; the child is less liable to forget an animal than a plant. Probably the greatest value after the pleasure children derive from pets is the training in their care which should accompany and be a part of that pleasure.

Distinctions of Property.

Parents often ask whether the child should be allowed to have the run of the house. Should he be permitted to wreak his pleasure on our most treasured possessions, or must we remove from his reach all things that he might in any way damage? The case of a woman who said that her two passions were children and early American furniture presents a dilemma with which one can sympathize. Should she arrange that the furniture and the children should never meet; should she banish the furniture—or the children? We have tried to suggest stages of training by which the temptation to work what a foreign father described as "his little damages" on the goods of the household should be removed from the young child by giving him the freedom of a room of his own where he can do no harm, and where his desires will not be forever met by prohibitions. Following this should come the gradual introduction of the child to the use and care of possessions, under adult supervision, and in later childhood, full freedom of use of family goods, tempered by respect for the prior rights of adults. This implies a distinction between mine, thine, and ours in respect of property.

The Child's Own Possessions.

How far has a child a right to the use or abuse of his own possessions? Wanton abuse should always be checked on the score that it is an undesirable form of behavior which we do not wish to become habitual. Bertrand Russell's principle of use as the basis of possession is a sound one; if the child is abusing or failing to use effectively something that has been given him, this would seem a legitimate reason for at least temporary removal. On the other hand, we must be sure that the child really is abusing his possessions. It is always amusing to watch a group of parents wax indignant over their children's proclivities for writing on the walls of their rooms. Yet how many have taken the simple precaution to provide a good-sized blackboard at convenient height for the child to use? Moreover, would any ill come from *encouraging* children to write on their own walls, having had them finished with waterproof paint so that the child's embellishments could be easily wiped off? Among the illustrations is a case of children who mounted a stepladder in order to draw aeroplanes on the ceiling of their room. This was cited to show the abnormal naughtiness in this particular family. But how pleasing to have children original enough to do this. Obviously the only place for aeroplanes was on the ceiling!

In the Children's Village at Detroit the walls of certain rooms have been finished with a waterproof surface, then decorated in charmingly imaginative fashion with birds, fishes, butterflies, insects, mice, toads, and even a snake, these all appearing in the most whimsical and surprising manner wherever one looked. In our own city a replica of the Peter Pan statue in Kensington Gardens affords delight to countless children. Why not encourage our children to make their own decorations? Active participation, no matter how elementary the form may be, is more educative than passive contemplation. Here as so often in these discussions we must point out the advantage of parents applying their ingenuity to devising *avenues of expression* for their children instead of inventing ways of punishing and restraining them. Not the marring of walls with their first crude attempts at a language of representation which is the beginning of art, but the aimless or obscene scribblings on bricks and pavements which are the dregs of a mind unpurged by wholesome and absorbing activities, is what parents ought to fear.

The Things of Others.

Even young children may be taught to distinguish between their own possessions, which they may use in original but not destructive ways, and those of others, which they must respect. Probably most of the minor annoyances of life arise because elementary distinctions of mine and thine have not been respected. It is perfectly good logic to exclude from a parent's room the child who persists in meddling with toilet articles, for instance, after their use and ownership have been carefully explained.

If adults wish to secure the inviolability of their own possessions they should be scrupulous in respecting the privacies of their children; their right to their own rooms, and their ownership of things which may seem worthless junk from the adult point of view. These same things have value and meaning for the child, and it is poor reasoning to expect to inculcate a respect for the goods of others if we ourselves do not show such consideration.

Common Possessions.

It is undesirable that children should get the impression of a division of goods on a strictly individual basis. While they should have the satisfaction that resides in private ownership, they should also have experience in sharing other things. With goods held in common, consideration of the needs and wishes of others will enter in to govern personal use. The radio is a good example of a family possession of this sort. Children may want one sort of a program and adults another. Such differing tastes and interests may become an occasion of bickering; on the other hand, it is in just such situations of disputed rights that parents, if they are resourceful and will take the trouble to look for a way out of difficulty, can act as arbiters and encourage practice in the successful give and take of family life. Forbearance and willingness to share are conspicuous family virtues. One of the strong claims of the nursery school is that it teaches children to take turns, to recognize the rights of others. This is comparatively easy in a more or less standardized situation, it is not so easy in the more complex and varied circumstances of the family. But for this very reason its accomplishment should be all the more satisfying to parents. The real value of learning to share, however, lies in the fact that this is necessary alike for the training of the individual and for the smooth functioning of social life.

OUTLINE V

CONSTRUCTIVE AND DESTRUCTIVE TENDENCIES

I. Destructive Tendencies:
  Adult and child values different.
  Destructiveness in child may be
    —regression to infantile type of behavior,
    —satisfaction of self-assertive tendency,
    —revolt against restraining circumstances.

II. Levels of Constructive Activity:
  Aimless Activity—mere expression of appetite for change,
    —opportunity for mischief.
  Manipulation—sense experience,
    —importance of curiosity,
    —flitting nature of behavior.
  Construction—from simple to complex forms,
    —interest in pattern and design.
  Social Use—making objects for a purpose,
    —social imitation,
    —social participation.

III. Principles of Control:
  Satisfy the child's need for activity in appropriate ways.
  Teach the use of possessions—opportunities to satisfy curiosity,
    —responsibilities for care.
  Teach distinctions of property
    —mine—to use in my own ways,
    —thine—respect for the things of others,
    —ours—use of common possessions.

IV. References:
  Gruenberg, B. C.—*Guidance of Childhood and Youth,* Section V.
  Thom, D. A.—*Everyday Problems of the Everyday Child,* Chapter XII.

V. Questions:
  1. When should children be allowed to have scissors, and how should their use be safeguarded?
  2. What would you do to a child who cuts his hair off?

ILLUSTRATIONS V

CONSTRUCTIVE AND DESTRUCTIVE TENDENCIES

I. *"Destructive" Tendencies.*

1. "I had the children's room papered with animals low down on the wall. My little girl of three spent her time picking the animals off. She would wet the paper in order to get them off, and would have ruined the room in no time. She was destroying something that was valuable. I think that a spanking stopped her."

2. "My child has a blackboard and chalk, but she wants to write on the doors and walls of her room. It is the same with scissors; if nothing else is handy she cuts the dresser scarf or her quilt or nightie. I do not like to deny her the scissors as it is one of her pastimes."

3. "We have a blackboard but it has not stopped writing on the walls. It is a good thing to have the room decorated with a hard paint that can be washed off. I am teaching my little girl to take care of her own room. If she marks on the walls I get her to help wash it off."

4. "I had a boy who used to take everything apart. I did not discourage him because I did not think that anything would stop his doing it. Now that he is thirteen he is trying to make an auto, and is keenly interested in chemistry. He has always wanted to know what things are made of. If he were ill an old alarm clock to take to pieces gave him the greatest pleasure."

5. "I know a family where the children covered the walls with their drawings. They even got a step-ladder and climbed up to the ceiling to draw an aeroplane there."

6. "My child of three persists in pulling the leaves off a large fern which I have in the living room. I always slap her hands when I find her doing this, but though I have done this

on as many as five occasions she does the same thing whenever she has the chance."

7. "My little girl was warned not to break her china doll. She deliberately slammed it on the fireplace to see it break."

8. "My child had been warned about marring the furniture in the living room. He went in the other day and tried to get a pack of cards out of my desk, and pulled the knob off the desk and lost it. If angry he goes in and scratches the furniture."

9. "We went to a picnic this summer. It was for adults but there were three or four children, my little fellow of four and the others between nine and eleven. While the adults were having refreshments, the boys were playing and it seems that somehow or other my boy threw gravel at a brand new car. When it was discovered, the owner was just furious, and we felt very badly. We didn't know just what to do. We made him stay with us, and it was not until a couple of hours later that we could have a good talk with him about it. His father said it was my fault, since he should not have been left with nothing to do, provision should have been made by me for his entertainment. The owner of the car was wild that we did not punish him then and there. He said, 'He should be punished with a damn good hiding.' "

10. "My little girl plays alone in a room with a gate. My problem is books. We have the Milne books and in the evening she looks at them and has never destroyed them. But the other day she took the books upstairs unknown to me and tore them. What should I do?"

11. "Should my boy not be scolded for doing something wrong? What if he were to take a picture off the wall and tear it to pieces? Jimmy did this when he was two years and four months. He enjoyed it tremendously. His bed was near it and he did not want to go to sleep that afternoon. He had already thrown all his bedclothes on the floor.

"I just let him feel it was not the thing to do. I stood quietly by for ten minutes. He came up finally and said, 'Jimmy is a bad boy.' I said, 'Is he going to be a good boy?' and he said, 'Yes.' All the rest of the pictures are in the same position. I had put them down low as I understand it is the right place so that the child can see them. That one was an *Illustrated News* which he particularly liked. He never tore any more."

Leader: "I wonder what would have happened if you had quietly taken the other pictures down and put them out of reach without saying anything?"

"I do not think he would have bothered. I like to put temptation in his way and let him know what he should do."

12. *Mother:* "When in bed with a cold my four-year-old daughter cut all her front hair off, 'just to see it drop!' "

Leader: "Did this do any harm?"

Mother: "She does not look so nice."

Leader: "She may suffer from social consequences and not do it again."

Mother: "I said she could not go to Sunday School, and she will probably not do it again."

Another Mother: "My child cut her hair in similar fashion. She went to the church kindergarten as usual, but when she came home I asked what the teacher had said about her hair. Her reply was, 'She was too polite to mention it.' "

Analyze the illustrations above indicating if they show:
(a) Disguised forms of the constructive impulse.
(b) Reactions from repressive discipline.
(c) Casual destruction for lack of satisfying occupation.
(d) Wanton and deliberate destruction.

II. *Teaching Values to the Child.*

1. "They do appreciate beautiful things at an early age. I show my baby how pretty a thing is, and tell her how easily it is broken; she will look at it but not touch it. She pulled the leaves off a plant once. She thought that daddy could fix everything, and when she looked at the leaves in her hand she said, 'Daddy fix.' She was quite heartbroken when she found that the damage could not be made good."

2. "To me there is never development of character if you take things away or lock them up. I have never taken away temptation. If the child went to the cabinet where I kept my china, the door of which does not lock, I took pieces out so that he might satisfy his curiosity by handling and looking while I was there. Then I firmly insisted each time after that that they

must not be touched. I started this training at the creeping stage."

Question: What would be the logical outcome of this doctrine of never removing temptation?

3. "I had difficulty with my child taking things off my dressing table. My silver mirror has a dent because I left it there. I went through a stage when I would take it from her and put it back again and again. She also took my nail-file and poked holes in the covering of the dressing table stool. I showed this to her and explained that she had spoiled it. She did this a couple of times. Now she leaves it alone."

4. "My boy loves a lamp which we have with a child's figure on it. I let him hold it and admire it. He knows that we prize it and he would not hurt it for anything."

5. "I find that the only successful way is to let my two-and-a-half-year-old boy touch everything. We never refuse to let him see and handle things. He always comes and asks. Just as soon as he has held and handled them he is satisfied."

III. *Mine, Thine, and Ours.*

1. *First Mother:* "I always lay great stress on possession. The children's things are their own, mine are my 'private property.' In my youth I suffered from two brothers who did not have respect for the property of others; my things were always being interfered with. So I lay great stress on private property."

Second Mother: "I teach my children to share their things, to speak of *'ours'* rather than of *'mine.'* "

First Mother: "That, of course, is the Communist point of view."

Note: It is interesting to see how the attitude of the first mother had been conditioned, first by her own early experience, and then by her social and political prejudices so that she was unable to view the contribution of her neighbor objectively.

2. "I have trouble with personal property. We are havin
it all the time. My children are seven, nine, thirteen ar

fifteen. It is very hard to teach them to respect one another's things. Some one is always taking the ball or skipping rope that belongs to another. I have always taken the attitude that a child has a right to his own things. But this does not encourage unselfishness."

3. "We have common property in our family; the child who starts with a toy has prior right to it until such time as he is ready to give it up for something else. Of course, there are times when they dispute, but not more than when one tries to maintain a sharp distinction of goods. Then there is not the difficulty in the fifteen minutes before bedtime of one child saying: 'That belongs to Bill, I am not going to put it away.'

"It is true that at Christmas time each child gets something that is his own, but he is not allowed to monopolize its use. The child who first gets a thing is held to a certain extent responsible for its care. Thus Bill has to scrub the tricycle and Jack the auto, though in playing with them the child who has it first has the prior right."

CHAPTER VI

DANGER SITUATIONS

Having discussed those activities of the child which involve annoyance for adults, it remains to consider those which involve risk for the child. The child is an adventurer in a strange world and he meets the risks which attend adventurers. He is peculiarly liable to fall a victim to his own experiments because of his lack of knowledge and forethought in regard to the situations in which he finds himself. It therefore becomes the task of the adults to supply this lack in his experience until he can make his way with safety. But there are psychological dangers attendant upon this process of making the world physically safe for the child: the adult may have an exaggerated idea of what constitutes a normal risk, and may go to extremes of protection more damaging to the child than any injuries he is likely to receive from his physical environment. In order to arrive at some principles which adults may follow in habituating children to their surroundings, it will be necessary to examine, first, the impulses that urge children into situations that may be fraught with danger and, secondly, the underlying reasons for over-caution on the part of adults.

Impulses Leading to Danger Situations.

Curiosity is a strong factor in the make-up of any normal child. Deriving from the activity impulse which we have discussed, it grows in complexity of organization as the child's experience develops. What things in the child's surroundings engage his curiosity? Undoubtedly, those which call attention to themselves by fact of movement; the swinging light, the fluttering curtain, the faces of adults that mysteriously come and go in the child's range of vision. Later the child finds fascination in those parts of the environment in which he can produce change; he shakes the rattle, swings the suspended doll and tries in a variety of ways to "start something" in the world around him. Incidentally, much of the activity which adults find trying in older children may belong to this category. The child talks, gets into mischief, cries or makes a fuss of some sort in order to see what will happen. Social experimentation of this sort is in a sense more dangerous than experimentation with physical objects for the reason that the consequences are more incalculable.

Play with Natural Elements.

What objects in the environment of the runabout child does he find particularly intriguing? The range of objects is innumerable but from the standpoint of contact in play the child's cosmos can conveniently be classified under the four basic elements which the Greeks held comprised the world, namely, earth, air, fire and water.

Earth involves no particular risk and affords the most ready medium of play for children. Consequently, the child may be allowed to indulge his native affinity for dirt by as much play with clay, mud, sand and stones as his mother's conventions of cleanliness and tidiness will allow. There are significantly fewer very clean and neat children than there used to be. The revolution in children's clothes from frilly petticoats to sun suits has made possible the emancipation of the child from the bondage of keeping his person spotless. Only once, in six years' experience with groups, have we met a parent who believed contact with earth to be dangerous for children on the score of likelihood of infection with disease from that source. This attitude sprang from extended residence in the Orient where conditions of public health and sanitation are unfavorable.

Air is not a medium but an important condition of healthful play. Preventive medicine has fully established the advantages of plenty of fresh air and sunshine. Even the rigors of winter weather should not allow us to deprive children of these advantages since proper clothing will overcome any possible dangers or discomforts from low temperatures. From a different angle, namely, activity, children have a strong propensity for getting into the air in elevated positions by means of swings, climbing trees, buildings, cliffs, etc. The reasons for this are basic in child nature, namely, the supreme need for bodily activity, added to the broadened sensory experience and increased sense of power and superiority which these positions of vantage seem to afford children. Stevenson's poem "The Swing" well expresses the delight of children in these experiences whereas many parents view them only in terms of broken limbs or necks. It is important that these opposing outlooks should not result in conflict between parent and child. The obvious solution with younger children is to provide simple but safe apparatus, a jungle gym, large packing boxes, short light ladder, etc. If the adventurous spirit is not at the outset prohibited, due caution will be learned by the child, which will serve to see him safely past his climbing period. One other point deserves mention in connection with this craving for levitation and the accompanying danger of falling. Watson has demonstrated in his experimental work with infants * that loss of support is one of the few physical stimuli which universally produce the fear reaction. The counterpart of this fact is that in a situation of precarious support the person automatically as well as consciously reacts with all his powers to maintain his position. The danger of falling is therefore actually much less than the onlooker might suppose, but in addition to this, the child is also learning to conquer a far more serious danger—the giving way to fear.

Fire is an element that remains of compelling interest all through life, alike for young children and adults. The basic character of this fascination is also evidenced from the fact that from earliest times, men have regarded fire in the sense of a bright flame as synonymous with change, power, motion or even with the Divine. Psychological reasons underlie this profound interest. In the first place, movement or brightness are each characters of the external world which strongly tend to attract the attention of our senses but in the case of fire these properties are united with the result that they form an almost irresistible combination. Secondly, fixation of sustained sensory attention is the natural antecedent to direct action upon the object fixated, hence the child will play with fire as naturally as the moth darts into the candle flame or the crowd gathers at a conflagration. The associations between action and fire experience ramify widely, so that merely the sound of distant reels will arrest our attention and often draw us from our chairs. It is thus not strange if the child's discovery that he can produce startling effects by the mere scraping of a match he finds loose at hand, should tend to be repeated. To counteract the dangers attendant upon a native response of such strength, only a careful and consistent educative policy can avail; mere prohibitions or complete removal from the possibility of contact are worse than useless because they do nothing to modify impulse through the exercise of understanding and also they strengthen the urge to experiment surreptitiously with fire.

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* Watson, J. B., *Psychology from the Standpoint of a Behaviorist*, J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, 1919, pp. 199-200.

Water also thrills the child and for the same reasons: the fact that it moves and that one can produce fascinating changes by throwing stones, launching boats and so on. One sometimes observes a child hanging over a bridge in almost motionless contemplation of the flowing water underneath. It would be interesting to know what sort of reverie this situation engenders, as it seems one of the few occasions which can elicit attention with suppression of bodily movement in the child. More active interests manifest themselves in water plays of all sorts, from flooding the bath to sailing boats on the sea-shore. Parents often discourage such plays because the child gets his clothes or his surroundings wet. It would seem that they might in many cases adapt their methods to the child's needs, dressing him for such play and allowing a certain amount of mussing, provided the child helps to wipe things up after he is done. Bubble play or even filling of utensils and pouring of water at the kitchen sink seems to hold the attention of the small child for an unusually long period. Gesell in his guidance clinic at Yale has provided a small pool for the children to float water toys in. At the Child Welfare Station at the University of Iowa several charming outdoor pools have been constructed for the children to wade in. The growing demand for swimming pools in all our large cities and the throngs which crowd them are further evidences of the recognition of the basic nature of this impulse and the attempt to meet it in ways which provide both for the development and the safety of the child.

In the face of so much enlightened provision for the play needs of the child, it is astonishing to find many parents still clinging to the old idea of keeping the child away from activities which are inconvenient to them. The following instance came to our notice recently:

> A child of four had been provided with a wading pool in the garden. A neighbor's child came over in a white duck suit and was soon wet. He went home and reappeared shortly in an entire clean outfit. He got wet again, went home and was spanked. He did not come back till late in the afternoon, when he arrived in another fresh outfit. This time he had learned caution and he kept away from the water. Unfortunately, he sat down on the edge of the pool where the child, who belonged, had left some fresh mud pies to dry. This time he went home and was seen no more!

Experimentation.

As the child grows older, his interest takes on more complex forms of experimentation. Paralleling the development of the constructive motive, which we traced in the last chapter, or rather as a special form of this motive, goes the desire to see how things are put together, to know why they happen, to trace the simpler relations of cause and effect. Thus if the child ties a tin to the cat's tail or puts a pin on the chair of some unsuspecting visitor, he may be merely trying to discover what causes will produce what effects. Some readers may remember a classic entitled *Helen's Babies* which used to be much in vogue among children. The adventures of Budge and Toddy, the youthful heroes of this tale, partook of just this sort of experimentation. The adult attitude to pranks and naughtiness was characteristic of the time, a blend of reprobation and amusement. In reality, Budge and Toddy were only scientists gone wrong. Most of us who read their adventures wished that we had been inventive enough to perform like feats. Probably the present day offers greater facilities for children to try out experiments in a fashion which is socially acceptable. Early familiarity with causal relations is becoming an indispensable part of the training of children who are surrounded on every hand with the products of mechanical invention. Electricity has transformed not only our standards of living but our thinking as well. Not, of course, that we wish our children turned into little professors, but that opportunities for them to realize the nature of the forces which operate in the world around them is one of the first steps towards their learning to control that world and to move safely in it.

The Lure of the Unknown.

Children not only wish to experiment, they are equally keen to explore. The very fact that a situation is new, untried and possibly dangerous constitutes a challenge for the healthy child. The self-assertive tendency whose importance in the development of personality is so great, augments itself by the search for adventure. The child pits himself against his environment and endeavors to conquer it. Undoubtedly children are often terrified by the situations into which they venture, climbing trees and roofs, walking on high places and so on. They may have gone into the undertaking on a dare from another child, but equally they may have dared themselves to do it. Thus the timid child is often seeking compensation by forcing himself to do things which he really shrinks from doing. There may be a pathological element in such behavior if acts of the sort described come to have a compulsion for the child so that he cannot resist performing them.

Running Away.

Again, children may seek adventure because they desire to escape from their surroundings. Such escape may be the result of conflict in the home situation which reaches its climax in a running-away episode; but running away is so common a phenomenon of childhood that it may indicate nothing more than that the child has become bored with his customary surroundings and is seeking a change. Children are apt to break out in this way occasionally, running off from school, going off on "hikes" without the knowledge of their families and other forms of insubordination. To meet such behavior with repressive measures is to treat the effect while ignoring the cause. The child's escape is a healthy protest, a demand for more variety, for relief or possibly for more stimulation, from his environment. Here again adult experience should help us to a sympathetic understanding of the feelings of the child. Who has not felt, when the pressure of circumstance seemed too great, the impulse to run away, to seek fresh scenes where one might be free from the hampering responsibilities of the daily grind? Children who have few social ties and a slighter sense of social obligation than adults, react naïvely to such impulses by going where their fancy takes them. One remedy for this type of *wanderlust* would seem to be to provide legitimate occasions for it.

When children show a tendency to run away parents should first ask themselves, "Why?" and this in a serious spirit of enquiry, on the principle that no event occurs without a cause. Is the discipline of the home too strict, does the child lack companionship, or is it simply that he has too few breaks in the daily round? Having found the cause, this should indicate the remedy. Direct attention to the overt manifestations is seldom wise. The following case is an amusing illustration of the efficacy of ignoring the child's behavior:

A boy of five kept threatening to run away if his parents did not do exactly as he wanted. They were advised to encourage him to go when the next opportunity came. Accordingly, when he was refused some privilege and produced the old threat, his mother said, "Very well. Would you care to wear your best suit and shall I pack a little lunch for you?" He departed blithely in the best suit with the lunch while the mother telephoned her husband to take no notice if he met the boy on his way home. Suppertime came and the child had not returned. After supper the parents sat on the porch in growing perturbation. The family cat joined them as if aware of the crisis. When the suspense seemed too great to be borne any longer a small figure was seen coming up the street in the dusk. He came slowly nearer, while the parents preserved as indifferent a pose as they could assume. When he reached the house, he sidled up the walk, looked gravely at the cat and enquired, "Is that the same cat you had before I went away?"

The passionate delight of children in picnics, excursions and expeditions of all sorts suggests a safe way of satisfying the adventure motive. It sometimes seems that the children of the less well-to-do fare better in this respect than those from more privileged homes. The average mother in comfortable circumstances is apt to be so engrossed with her home and her social activities that she does not readily break through the customary routine to plan extra "treats" for her children. Whereas those on whom the cares of the world sit more lightly are more ready to share in their children's recreations. As parents, we ought again to consider our scale of values. It is important to have well-ordered homes, to have a routine and to follow it; it is also important, alike for ourselves and for our children, to be able to break away from our accustomed tasks. Nothing indicates better the mental health of a family than its resourcefulness in occasional escapes from the daily round.

Porter Lee in an exceedingly suggestive paper read recently in Washington * has produced evidence in the nature of reminiscences to show how vital a part this experience of Festival, as he calls it, plays in experience:

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* Lee, Porter R., *The Family as a Constructive Force in Mental Hygiene*, Advance Printing, First International Congress on Mental Hygiene, May, 1930, pp. 8-9.

"The frequency with which the three hundred coöperators in this study have recorded the association of satisfying human experiences with this festival spirit testifies to its operation in normal family life as one of the constructive forces. Do we in mental hygiene appreciate its possibilities as fully as we appreciate the possibilities of an exaggerated sense of authority? Are we as aware of the varied ways in which it expresses itself as we are of the forms of behavior to which an exaggerated sense of authority leads? Are we as sure in our use of it in treatment plans as we are in our exposition to pathological parents of the evils of exaggerated authority? I doubt it; but we should be. Moreover, because science, education and treatment are not sufficiently aware of the possibilities of festival and promotion as constructive experiences, their possibilities are much less apparent to families than they should be. This study suggests that they do play an impressive part in stabilizing and enriching family life."

While a modicum of adventure is normal to the experience of all children, with some it reaches extreme forms, as in the case quoted in the records of the child whose favorite form of amusement was walking round the cornice or scaling the roof of the house. Undoubtedly some exceptional people must have a taste for this sort of performance, or where would our "human flies," tight rope walkers and parachute jumpers come from? But usually if this tendency is persistent and not amenable to sane methods of control, one should look further for an explanation in the conditions of the child's life. Why does he need the "kick" that comes from such dare-devil exploits? Is he doing it, as was suggested above, to compensate for some lack or defect? Is he basking in the notoriety that rewards his adventures? Is this the only way he can call attention to himself and demonstrate his superiority to circumstance? Is he finding a perverse pleasure in overriding prohibitions? Only an extended study of an individual case and his family can tell.

In dealing with all such cases of daring and foolhardiness it should be remembered that prohibitions are poor educational tools; that, in fact, they may only constitute a further challenge to the child. It remains, therefore, to turn to a discussion of the why of adult attitudes to danger situations to see if rational principles of control, appropriate alike to the impulses of the child and to the responsibilities of the adult, can be devised.

Just as we have to restrain foolhardiness by training in caution, so in other cases where the child is timid it is necessary to form a plan of reëducation in order to establish confidence. A good example of a case of this sort is that from our records where the two brothers had been teased and pushed into the water so that a deep-seated fear had developed which prevented their learning to swim. It is, of course, much better to prevent such attitudes developing than to have to cure them after they arise. Children should never be forced into the water, but should be slowly accustomed to it and taught how to adjust themselves to it. If they have become frightened, patient instruction under a swimming teacher who is informed of the emotional factors involved but is not himself emotionally concerned, would seem the best remedy. One hardly needs to say that no thoughtful parent will allow a child to grow up at the present time without being taught how to swim. The importance of swimming for motor coördination, exercise and health, as well as for safety in danger, can hardly be overestimated.

Adult Restraint.

If we envisage the child as straining forward, eager to explore the unknown, we see in the adult an equally immediate impulse towards restraint. The impulse to shelter and protect the child is deep-seated. Coupled with this is the fact that a history of trying experiments may have induced in the adult a strong preference for the known and the proven. He, therefore, or she should view with due concern the first tentative movements of the child towards testing the quality of an often unfriendly world. Consider also that the young child is just emerging from a period of complete dependence on the mother. That dependence, irksome as it may be in some respects, is on the whole pleasant, as augmenting the parent's sense of power and mastery and as satisfying what McDougall calls the tender emotions.* The child's desire to seek experience for himself in his own right threatens parental dominance; it is often unconsciously resisted for this reaon by parents who would repudiate this attitude in themselves did they realize it.

The motor tendency of withdrawal, of snatching the child away, thus seems to be the first and natural reaction of parents in such situations as we have been describing. Let us see how this withdrawal attitude works in actual practice before we go on to discuss a modification of this original response into more constructive forms of control.

Verbal Warnings.

Verbal warnings are perhaps the commonest method which parents resort to in attempting to shield their children from danger situations. "Don't touch, don't run out on the street, don't go near the water" are all forms of verbal prohibition with which we are familiar. How much do they accomplish? A carefully controlled study of the relative efficacy of various forms of restraint has not, as far as we are aware, been undertaken by any of the various safety leagues which are trying to spread safety principles among children. As far as one can judge from casual observations in a home situation and from discussion of the matter with groups of mothers, verbal warnings, unless accompanied by sensory experience, are of little value. The child who touches the hot radiator withdraws his hand. If the word "hot" is systematically associated with this sensory experience it can be used, in due course, as a substitute for that experience. With little difficulty, the child can be taught to withdraw on hearing the word "hot," without actually feeling the heat. This is a typical case of "conditioning." But the necessary core of sense experience is overlooked when parents trust to verbal warnings alone. At best they can supply only incidents drawn from reports in the papers, relying on imagination and hearsay to take the place of experience. In many situations, such for example as motor accidents, it is highly undesirable that there should be a core of sensory experience. A more effective method than verbal warning alone must therefore be devised to guard children against situations which represent a real and inevitable element of danger.

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* McDougall, Wm., *Social Psychology,* Methuen & Co., pp. 56-57.

Teaching Only by Consequences—Conditioning by Shock.

There is a rather doctrinaire type of parent who practices, or at least professes, the method of letting a child find out by actual trial that knives will cut, that fire will burn, and, presumably, that water will drown and falls may kill. The difficulties of this method are obvious. If it be accepted as a general principle, untempered by discretion, the child may not survive to profit by experience. Even if not actually injurious, this method may involve consequences that are highly undesirable and unforeseen. The child may be left with a lasting fear or dread as a result of a situation which the parent has conceived as a useful warning. Also, if a too intense avoiding reaction is established, the child may be hampered in a situation in which it is necessary that he act resolutely. Take the question of motor hazards. It is imperative that children should learn how to cross the street in traffic. Caution is highly desirable in such a situation; fear, caused by an accident or near accident, can only be a drag on the promptness and dependability of the child's reactions. This may seem to labor the point, but it is important to realize that the discipline of natural consequences can only have limited applicability to the behavior of the young child. At the critical points in the child's experience, adults must be at hand to regulate and interpret the forces to which the child is exposed.

Modified Experience.

This phrase may serve to describe the kind of mitigation of the direct action of natural laws to which we have been referring. If the child is only exposed to the heat of the fire enough to teach him that it will burn, but not enough to burn him, if he feels the knife to know that it is sharp but is not allowed to cut himself with it, he may learn to avoid dangers without too marked withdrawal reactions being developed. We conceive it to be the duty of parents to undertake this modification at every turn where the experience of the child exposes him to real danger. It is equally undesirable to have this type of supervision and interpretation thrust into situations where it is not necessary. This is a nice line to draw between too great and too little supervision.

The desired result of the type of restraint which we have outlined should be to make the child careful. There are undesirable results which may also appear. Too much restraint and protection will tend to make the child timid and dependent. He will cling to his protector and hesitate to act on his own initiative. On the other hand, over-restraint may make the child impatient, defiant or rebellious. He may then be incited to greater risks than he normally would have taken and these risks will probably be run surreptitiously, thereby increasing the danger that the parent hoped to lessen. Lastly, the parent may unconsciously though selfishly use the shelter motive as a means of keeping control over the child. The mother who ties her son to her apron strings has always perfectly good reasons to offer on the ground of her anxiety for the welfare of the child. Those of us who were restrained in childhood from swimming, going in a boat, climbing trees, building bon-fires or going on hikes in the country may be alive and sound to-day as the results of such restraints, but we probably have suffered defects in our personalities for which protection may be a poor compensation. It is important to bear in mind that we are dealing not only with physical safety but with a psychological relation. It may be much more important to let a child run risks and thereby achieve his independence than to keep him in leading strings for the sake of a presumed danger.

Teaching Control.

If restraint alone seems inadequate as protection for the child, it remains to be said whether there is a more constructive way of dealing with danger situations. May we introduce here again our idea of a learning process which the parent can direct and control in the interests of the child's development? If so, what are the essentials of such a procedure?

Anticipating Unnecessary Risks.

It is the responsibility of the parents first of all to eliminate from the environment of the child elements of needless risk. This elementary point seems often to be missed by parents. The question recurs again and again, "How shall I keep my child from leaning out of open windows? How shall I keep him from playing with fire, from getting at poisonous medicines?" The obvious answer is that the windows should be barred or opened from the top so that the child is not able to lean out, that the fire should be screened so that the toddler cannot get into it and that dangerous medicines should be kept in a locked chest. This, of course, applies specially to small children who have not reached an age at which they can understand the risks they run. As they grow older their discretion can be more and more appealed to and relied on. Parents should not, however, be surprised when their children exhibit seemingly inexcusable lapses in judgment. There are bound to be gaps in their experience, which we do not realize, which may make them a prey to dangers when we least expect it. This may be especially the case in regard to social situations. Nothing could be more unfortunate than to sow in a child's mind distrust and fear of his fellows, yet in any large city it is essential that children should be warned against too great friendliness with strangers. Just how much precaution is necessary it is quite impossible to say in general terms. The parent must judge of each child individually and even so situations will arise of which the child has not been forewarned. In these, we can only trust to the child's training carrying over from other occasions. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance that we should inculcate in children positive methods of decision and control in order that they may be capable of managing themselves in emergencies instead of mere negative habits of avoidance.

Learning How to Meet a Danger Situation.

Danger situations should be treated as *learning* situations, their component parts sorted out and the child taught how to meet each aspect as it arises. One important implication of such a method is that it minimizes the emotional reactions in a danger situation and facilitates prompt action. A good example is the fire drill in our schools, and the way in which children respond in such situations shows how effective this method can be. It is the only sort possible when dealing with children in the mass, with respect to a crisis when immediate action is essential. It has, however, limited applicability to the situations in home life where more varied situations call for greater flexibility of response, for initiative and ability to think and act quickly and with judgment in an unprecedented situation.

The practice which children in the nursery school receive in learning to climb the jungle gym is a simple example which illustrates the value of a flexible type of adaptation. During the two or three years that children have access to this apparatus, they may climb or not as they choose, but if they do elect to climb, an adult is at hand to guide their first efforts, to show them how to hold, where to place their feet and so on. The child is thus freed from any preoccupations as to his safety. He can put all his energies into the operation of climbing, knowing that some one is there to help him if necessary. He soon learns to go all over this piece of apparatus with agility second only to that of a monkey. He feels satisfaction and a sense of power in such activity and is likely to pursue it with zest until it becomes second nature to him to climb. Such a child is able to climb trees with ease and in an emergency if he had to climb down a ladder from a burning building he would be much more apt to give a creditable account of himself than a child who had never learned the motor coördinations necessary to climbing and who lacked, moreover, the mental adjustments which are a part of the climbing experience.

Similarly with crossing the street. Among the illustrations is the case of a mother who took her child to a busy corner and, after taking him across several times, stood on one side of the street while he crossed and recrossed through the traffic. Probably, we should prefer to stretch the learning process over a longer time interval, accustoming the child to cross with us, explaining how to recognize the traffic signals, what special things to watch for, when to look up and when down, etc. Then we might gradually feed out responsibility to the child, holding him by the hand but having him decide when to cross, etc. It would seem that such an all-important matter as teaching the child how to make his way through traffic should never be left to chance. If parents would spend the ingenuity they bestow on making children dependent on them in traffic or on punishing them when they escape the leash on teaching them how to control themselves, we might have fewer accidents. It is common in groups of parents to hear complaints of how reckless children are in running out on the street and to have appeals for suggestions as to punishments for such behavior. Our records show only two accounts of a definite attempt to treat this as a learning situation, and by gradual habituation, with instruction, demonstration and practice, to accustom the child to regulating his own behavior in this particular. Yet it is obvious that self-regulation is the only safe kind, as the child cannot always depend on the parent and this very dependence will incapacitate him for acting on his own responsibility.

One more example before we leave this point of training and that in respect of the uses of fire. The cited illustrations are particularly suggestive in this regard. The case of the child who had burned himself repeatedly and who persisted in lighting the gas ring is suggestive. It shows how futile negative methods are with a persistent child. The only sane procedure in such a case is to teach the child how to light and how to turn off the stove, and then allow him to do it. Much of the extreme curiosity that children display in respect to lighting matches, turning on the gas jet, and so on would be dissipated if, instead of being warned off, with a great show of excitement, the child were quietly shown how to perform the tempting operation and then sometimes allowed or even called to light the match or turn on the gas when these operations were required. If parents will take the trouble to do this, even with the restriction that it is to be practiced when they are present, the child's inordinate preoccupation with that activity will soon disappear. Children are usually more reasonable than we believe, whereas lack of belief on our part may easily cultivate unreasonableness in them.

The illustration of the children who lit the bonfire under the steps is instructive; it shows how prohibitions drove them into a surreptitious course which presented dangers far greater than the original act itself. The complication of danger situations by emotional attitudes involving adults is too large a question to be adequately covered here. One more example, however, may be noted as illustrating this from a somewhat different angle. The child who persistently turned on the gas in spite of punishments, warnings and threats seems at first a straightforward case, but when investigated, it was found that the child's behavior was the subject of violent and frequent conflicts between the parents and the grandparents all of whom were living together. One party favored a system of rigorous punishment; the other advocated leniency. The child's tampering with the gas had come to have an ulterior purpose from his awareness of the domestic situation; he turned on the family strife with the gas. This had become his way of calling attention to himself and securing the center of the stage while the domestic battle waged around him. This indicates again that the psychological issues may be more significant than the immediate physical ones.

A Reasonable Freedom for the Child.

In addition to treating danger situations as occasions for learning we should train ourselves as parents in a somewhat stoical attitude. We must recognize that we cannot for all time protect the child, and that it is crippling to his spirit if we attempt to do so. We too must be prepared to take risks, risks that are all the harder to endure in that we are passive and often prey to wholly imaginary dangers whereas the child is in the thick of the situation, with the stimulus of the adventure to sustain him.

We do well, also, to allow to children a fair amount of freedom, to overlook an occasional breaking of bounds in the interests of securing a reasonable and coöperative attitude on the part of the child in regard to his activities. Parents often feel that if they allow one exception, the rule is destroyed, forgetting that learning is always through trial *and error.* We have tried to point out that occasional breaking of rules may be a sort of safety device which makes possible the keeping of them in ordinary circumstances. For example, two children, eight and ten years of age, were in the habit of roller skating on their own street. They went out one morning, after being cautioned as usual not to go off the quiet street on which they lived. An hour later a friend on the other side of the city telephoned to say that they had just arrived at her house! They spent the morning there, visiting a park on the way home. This park, by the way, was one which they had repeatedly asked to visit and which they had not been taken to see. The parents felt that this was quite an unusual outbreak but that they themselves had been at fault in not seeing that the children's request about the park had been more planfully dealt with. Beyond commenting on the fact that the children had gone off without permission, no action was taken in the matter. There has been no recurrence of this type of behavior.

Lastly, when a crisis does arise, when a child gets up a tree and then gets frightened or locks himself in the bathroom and forgets the combination, then the demeanor of the adult becomes the controlling factor in the situation. The child's self-control will depend on that of the adult; if the latter betrays excitement, the child will be infected and serious consequences may result. To keep the tones of the voice at their natural pitch is one of the obvious measures of control as nothing betrays emotional disturbance more quickly or forcibly than the voice. Even a degree of control which seems highly artificial may be adequate to tide over the danger, reënforcing the child's confidence so that he may be able to act adequately.

One last word in regard to what is generally described as "emergency obedience." Parents often feel that it is desirable to drill children in habits of unquestioning obedience in order that they may respond promptly and unquestioningly in a crisis. The trend of this discussion should have made it clear that the safety of children depends, not on readiness to respond to orders so much as on judgment and decision in regulating their own actions. In those rare circumstances when a sudden danger threatens of which the child is not aware, the tone of voice and inflection will convey with sufficient strength the gravity of the situation. The child who has been accustomed to reasonable treatment from his parents will not stop to cavil at their commands in a crisis. Not frequency of orders but the fact that commands are rare will be the surest guarantee of securing the child's attention and action should that need occur.

OUTLINE VI

DANGER SITUATIONS

I. Impulses leading to Danger Situations:
  Curiosity, the activity impulse
    —interest in elements—earth,
                                         —air,
                                         —fire,
                                         —water.
    —experimentation.
  Adventure, self-assertive tendency
    —climbing,
    —running away,
    —over-riding prohibitions.

II. Adult Attitudes:
  Restraint—verbal warnings,
              —conditioning by shock,
              —modified experience.
  Control—guard against needless risks,
            —teach child how to meet the situation,
            —allow a reasonable freedom,
            —keep cool in a crisis.

III. References:
  Child Study Association—*Parents' Questions*, First Series.
  Gruenberg, B. C.—*Guidance of Childhood and Youth*, Section III.

IV. Questions:
  1. How would you deal with persistent attempts on the part of a three-year-old child to turn on the gas?
  2. How should one deal with a child of eight who climbs high trees?

ILLUSTRATIONS VI

DANGER SITUATIONS

I. *Methods of Restraining Children.*

1. *Verbal Warnings:*

"I found my boy of two and a half on the roof of a house. He had climbed a painter's ladder. At home he steps out on the roof of the porch through French doors from his room. I have explained that it is dangerous and I try to keep the doors closed so that he cannot open them, but whenever he gets the chance he goes out."

"I saw my boy jump on a sleigh going at full speed. He knows it is dangerous, for I have told him about accidents, but I could not prevent him doing it. We have to warn children and then take a chance and not overdo cautioning them."

"At our summer place, we have bonfires on the shore. When we came home I found, one day, that the children had built a bonfire under the back veranda. I showed them the danger. A day or two afterwards I saw some smoke again and found one behind the garage. I had told them not to do it near the house, so they did out there, getting another child to do the actual lighting of it. There were two or three other bonfires in the neighborhood before we finally got it stopped."

"My little boy has been lighting paper and sticks in the gas pilot of the oil burner. The gas pilot is in the cellar. He lights the stick there and then comes upstairs with the flame. He is three. He has been around bonfires once or twice. Telling has no effect."

2. *Conditioning by Shock:*

"I let my child get burned. I also let her cut herself with a sharp knife. I feel that I taught her something about all knives."

"How would you go about teaching a child not to touch fire? I have a child of seven who is not in the least afraid of it although he has burned his fingers quite badly with matches. The other day, I had the kitchen range lid off and in a minute he had put a stick in though I had told him not to. Later I lit the gas jet and went to get the kettle and while I was away he held a comb in the gas jet. The celluloid blazed up but he held on to it until I got to him. The next day something was boiling over and I thought that he would be afraid to go to the stove, but he was there in a flash. Ever since he was little he has had a passion for lighting matches."

3. *Modified Experience:*

"The other day the baby tried to touch something hot. I took his finger and held it up against it. It hurt, but not enough to burn. He has never touched it since. He knows it is hot."

"When my children were three and five, they were allowed to climb trees but were told not to go on those branches that had no leaves on. They didn't always remember, so I took them to a place where they would not get a severe fall and let them climb on a branch that would not bear their weight. They came down with quite a crash and got scratched up. I only had to do it once with each of them."

"I tried cautions and punishments without avail. One day I saw a dead cat on the street and I showed it to my boy and explained what had happened—that it had been run over. I stressed the point that the cat couldn't move, rather than it was dead. It made such a deep impression on him that he has never run out on the road since."

II. *Results of Over-cautioning.*

"My little boy is three and a half. We started when he was very young and cautioned him and now I know that I can trust him. He will not run out on the street and he will not play with matches. But I wonder if I haven't gone too far. He will not climb a tree nor take any of the risks that are usual for his age. I wonder if I haven't overdone the cautioning."

"I was walking along a country road with my little girl and holding her hand, when suddenly she asked if she might not let go and be allowed to cross the road herself. I realized that in my anxiety to safeguard her on the city streets, I had actually been restricting her in a different and perfectly safe environment."

"I told my children that if they turned on the gas it would either make them sick or kill them. I wondered at the time if it was right to build up such a fear but the danger seemed to justify it. I did the same thing with regard to the windows. We lived in a high apartment and there were no screens. I told them that if they fell out of the window they would not be able to move again. It worked well. Do you think that caution built up in these connections carries over to other situations? I have a little girl who is very cautious but the boy is just the opposite. I don't know whether in the case of the girl this treatment makes her still more timid."

"What would you do in case like that with my little boy? He will not go across the street even though I allow him and watch him? A couple of blocks away a little boy was killed while posting a letter. A child told my boy and he was frightened dreadfully. It was too much of a shock for him."

III. *Teaching Children How to Meet Situations.*

"As far as possible I let the children handle the things around them. I bought a small electric stove and they play with it without harm. Also, they have been accustomed to sharp scissors, to the use of pins, needles, etc. I feel that it is safer as it quickly teaches them confidence in using dangerous things."

"We had a lot of trouble with Roy turning on the taps of the gas stove. We tried a lot of things first. Then we used to call him and allow him to turn them on whenever they were needed. After that he lost interest in it."

"George wanted to play with the gas stove. I kept the matches out of the way but when I was going to use the stove I would call the child and let him turn on the jet for me. That seemed to satisfy him."

"I allow them to cross the street providing I am watching. If you see that the child watches carefully, looks both ways, you gain confidence and then you can let them do it themselves."

"When I accompanied Katherine to the nursery school, we had to cross a street with heavy traffic. I used to let her decide when we ought to cross. In that way she got plenty of practice and she is now, at six years of age, quite safe to be trusted alone. She frequently goes out by herself and crosses a car street."

"When my boy was about eight years old I took him to one of the busy corners in the city and stood there for about an hour while he crossed and recrossed in the traffic till I was sure that he knew what he was doing and could be allowed out alone."

"All last year I went to kindergarten and called for George. At first I would wait at intersections and finally he said, 'You act as if I was a baby. I can go across myself.' I said, 'Go then.' We had to cross street car tracks twice and busy side streets. His father took him to school and I went for him at noon. He did not come home alone but if he got to the street first, he crossed alone."

"I think children can learn a great deal through example. They watch us all the time. My little girl has had no definite experience with hot things but she sees me use potholders to lift a hot pot and asks why. In crossing the road we always look to right and left and I see that she does too when she is with me and I hope she will learn in that way to take care of herself rather than to let her have any horrible details about accidents."

IV. *Setting Bounds.*

"My child of a little over three has been allowed to play outside without a yard fence for months. I watch him and occasionally he has gone on the road. I always go and bring him back, saying, 'That is not where we go. That is the place for cars.' Practically every time he went he was brought back. He is now going through the experience of learning to cross the street. I do not let him cross alone yet. He is getting some actual experience of where cars go and how quickly they can go.

The two experiences went together. For most of the past year, we have not watched him. I have not said, 'You may go here and here and not any farther.' He has not gone too far. As regards going beyond the block or across the street, I shall simply wait until he does so. I will not punish him. I will wait until he does do it and see what he has to say."

"My little boy of three is allowed to play in front of the house but he knows that he is not to go away. The other day he disappeared and I found him in the cellar at a neighbor's house; he had gone down with the other children to see a dog. I took him home and shut him in the back yard for the rest of the morning, explaining that as he had gone away without permission, I would have to put him where he could not get out."

"I have set boundaries, from one telegraph post to the next, which gives him quite a run, and if he goes beyond them I make him come in and stay in each time it happens. I watch. Yes, it may be a punishment but it is the same every time and I see that it is immediate. I go right out and get him, if necessary."

"I find a small child has not a great desire to go far from home. George ran away when three years old. He was gone for nearly a whole afternoon and was found at Leaside, several miles from home. He told about a month ago why he ran away. He said, 'Do you remember when I ran away? I did not really run away. I saw a dog and started to walk after the dog. It went and I tried to find it. I did not really mean to run away.' "

"My little girl is six and a half and I don't allow her to go across car tracks alone. The other day, she went to her grandfather's and when she got there she telephoned me that she was all right and still alive. She knows the consequences and watched the signals. I didn't know whether to punish her for disobedience or to laud her for her bravery."

V. *Three Methods of Dealing with the Same Situation.*

"What about medicine? You can't always be sure that things are out of the way. At least, I know I can't always be sure that I have not left something around. We have some medicine that the children are taking and that they like. Yesterday Tony, four years old, got it from quite a high place, took some himself and when I came in was feeding baby some. It is a cough mixture and I don't suppose it is harmful but I wouldn't like to have them take it like that."

"We keep our medicine locked in the cabinet upstairs in the bathroom. It means a lot of trouble probably, going up and down stairs, but it is safer. My husband gave them a taste of something nasty out of the cupboard and as a precautionary measure we got a key and keep the cupboard locked."

"We have a shelf in the kitchen with mercurochrome, zinc oxide, etc., and they know it's there. If they get a cut or bruise or burn they know how to take care of it and how to use the various things."

Question: Which of these is the wiser procedure?

VI. *A Danger Situation as an Expression of Adult Conflict.*

A boy of three and a half was reported as turning on the gas repeatedly. He did this whenever he was reproved for anything; for example, one day he was asked to pick up a book left on the floor but at once he went and turned on the gas.

Inquiry showed that his paternal grandparents lived in the home. They believed in spanking as the remedy for all faults. Whenever the child did something of which they did not approve, they raised a commotion with the mother, who did not believe in punishment of the sort they advocated.

VII. *Contrasting Attitudes in One Family.*

"When my oldest child was three, she walked right out into the lake till the water was up to her arm-pits. Then she suddenly became frightened. She may also have been affected by her aunt who was with her and who is very frightened of the water. She would only paddle in shallow water after this and it was four years before she really overcame her fear. Now, at ten years, she is without fear.

"The boys, when they were five and six years old, were teased and splashed and ducked under by others. This makes it very difficult now as they are both frightened and will not learn to swim. They are even afraid to go under the shower at home or to go in boats.

"With the baby, when he was not quite two we had almost to tie him to keep him out of the water. He loved to sit and let the water splash over him."

Question: How do you explain the differing attitudes among these children? How would you set out correcting the boys' fears?

PART III

THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

CHAPTER VII

ADULT INFLUENCES—UNWITTING

> "It is not by the analysis of the mental processes of our children that we shall commonly expose the origin of faults of conduct, but rather by a careful and critical scrutiny of our own behaviour to them and our own management of them."

THIS sentence from Cameron's book, *The Nervous Child,** may well stand as the text of this chapter. Its truth is well demonstrated in the experience of parents who have come to study groups in the hope of getting help with their children. What they find through their study is just what Cameron says, that it is they more than their children who need to be adjusted. It is not so much the witting discipline of the home which calls for regulation as the more or less unconscious elements in the behavior of parents which have been exerting a profound if unrecognized influence on the behavior of the child.

In every family there are certain forms of behavior which are taken for granted, so that it is only when the child grows older and comes into contact with other standards in other homes that he realizes that these forms are not everywhere assumed in the same fashion. Children may grow up with the idea that one may speak freely of sex but must refrain from gossip or unkind comment to one's neighbors; across the street lives a family where the children have come to know that sex is taboo, but that the more they can find out and report about their neighbors the better their mother will be pleased. When children of these two families begin to mingle there is bound to be trouble. In such a situation only the ability to refer conventional attitudes to reasoned standards of behavior will be effective in establishing the confidence of the children whose assumptions have been called into question. Merely to set up family standards, "We have always thought and done so," in the face of contrary behavior on the part of our neighbors is a poor argument. If children accept it, they limit their capacity for growth in social experience; if they reject it they will tend to become more and more critical of their own family procedure till finally they may repudiate it entirely. In such a case the good is likely to be thrown out with the bad.

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* Cameron, H. C., *The Nervous Child,* Oxford Press, 1924, p. 50.

Manners for the Child.

In examining those things which are assumed within the family we shall first discuss manners, or the more conventional ethic of the family group. As regards manners, there is the greatest difference of emphasis. On the one hand there is a tendency to make the child's learning of certain forms of courtesy a highly conscious process. One sometimes sees small children put through a grueling drill in saying, "How do you do," shaking hands with strangers, taking off their caps in the house, and so on. Learning to say "please," and "thank you" may involve more conscious effort and more sorrow than keeping the decalogue. It may be assumed that we all want our children to be courteous and considerate of others; the difference is one of procedure rather than of ultimate results. This question illustrates nicely the difference between witting and unwitting influences. Do we make a truly polite child by making him acutely conscious of social forms, or does he absorb politeness by living in an atmosphere of consideration? If his parents are consistently thoughtful and kind in their dealings with one another and with him, may we not expect that in time he will assume this same attitude? A meticulous insistence of social forms seems often to defeat its own purpose. Instead of giving the child ease in society it makes him self-conscious and embarrassed. He is preoccupied with the outward form of his behavior rather than being free to make friendly adjustment.

As children grow older, they should be instructed in social forms, in the sense that we do not wish them to be put at a disadvantage by not knowing what to do or say in a given situation. By this time they will be only too anxious to do the correct thing. But with little children it seems wiser to let them express their attitudes more in their own fashion, except when it is a deliberately hostile one, in which case it must be checked. It is better to leave small children in the background as much as possible in their relations with grown-ups. If we are constantly calling them forward to ask them to shake hands, say good-by and so forth, we may too easily be taking occasion unconsciously to call attention to them as our wonderful children. One can usually recognize, in the child who sidles through a room as if avoiding an introduction the child who has suffered from over-insistence on manners. On the other hand, the child who has been allowed to cultivate a natural, friendly presence usually shows the better social poise, even though it may sometimes call for mild restraint. Miss Johnson has admirably summed up this in her discussion of manners: *

> "It seems to me that if, as the early years go by, children can get a sense of friendliness in social relationships, they will have an awareness of the real essence of courtesy. Later when they begin to analyze the structure of the social forms within which they are living, the acquisition of accepted techniques will be easy because they are sought."

The question is bound to arise as to how to deal with rudeness in children. What attitude should one take to the child who contradicts, who calls names, who gives vent to anger by physical attacks on other members of the family? In conformity with the line of thought we are here following, rudeness should be met by courtesy on the part of the adult rather than by rude rebuffs or reproofs. Children may be rude because of inexperience in social usages, in which case a simple explanation, given when the child is alone with the parent, will help to make clear what is and isn't done. Anger, if it is extreme, should be dealt with by the ordinary methods of removal and isolation. How-

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* *Children in the Nursery School,* p. 39.

ever, in many cases, the child is only expressing a momentary rebellion against authority; in such cases it seems better to disregard the child's behavior. Development takes care of many such difficulties. To be always on the alert to defend our dignity, to exact respect from children, is an indication that we are unsure of our position. A sense of humor which will enable us to overlook many petty assaults on our dignity is a good fortification, but lacking that, a humoring neglect of such outbursts is to be desired.

Moral Standards.

How should moral standards be taught to children? This question is one which educators have long debated and we have no unique prescription. Certainly the educational method of trying to meet the needs of the day through didactic lectures given to young people is by itself inadequate. Attacked from that angle the problem is insoluble, in the sense that morals are not taught, but learned. That is, no amount of formal teaching can make one accept a view of life to the extent of living it unless it chimes with our own nature and situation. On the other hand, it is equally futile to suppose that we can at any time escape from moral standards or from the effort of thinking these matters through for ourselves sooner or later. The family does not necessarily formulate its morals deliberately but it has them all the same, and the child absorbs them without being aware of the process. The child who was asked, "What is charity?" and whose reply was, "Getting things from the grocer on tick," had already absorbed a theory of moral obligation, even though he did not recognize it. The fact seems to be that we are incurably moral, notwithstanding those psychologists who prefer to ignore this point, and any theory of human behavior which is to be adequate must take this into account. Because morals are a framework of the customs of the group, and because man always lives his life in a social setting, and never purely individually, much of his behavior must be concerned with social adaptations. Moreover, his social adaptations will generally take their shape from the immediate social group in which he lives—the family household.

McDougall * distinguishes four levels of behavior, first, instinctive behavior, modified by pleasure and pain; secondly, behavior affected by the external element of rewards and punishments, social in nature; thirdly, conduct controlled by the anticipation of social praise and blame; and lastly, conduct regulated by an ideal, so that the person does what he believes to be right regardless of his immediate social environment. If one recognizes some such hierarchy of moral ends as a pertinent classification, still it does not allow us to escape from the social setting; we may repudiate the standards of our immediate environment, but we substitute for them another social order in relation to which our conduct is regulated. If we disregard the judgment of the ages, we are encompassed by a cloud of witnesses on whose approval we depend; or if we reject the values of the present world it is to flee to some ideal conception of a world beyond. Utopias are the inevitable refuge of the person who finds himself in conflict with accepted social usages. He must perforce invent a society in which he posits standards to which he can whole-heartedly conform.

Social Control.

Recognizing that for moral phenomena a social milieu is inevitable and is causally effective, the behavior of young children presents the lowest level of complication among humans since they usually accept without much question the standards of behavior with which they are surrounded in the home. Indeed, not resistance to but conformity with social pressure on the part of the child may be our real problem, a point we have previously made in other connections. Miss Johnson comments on this fact, that children are so readily amenable to social influences that we are under obligation to regulate the pressure of the social environment for them so that they may have a chance to develop their own social tastes instead of being overwhelmed by the cumulative force of the attitudes of those around.

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* *Social Psychology,* p. 156.

Social Suggestion.

The nursery school presents interesting examples of the way in which children respond to the customs and suggestions of the group of their peers. For example, children who have been habitually wet before coming to the school are likely to clear up this difficulty in a comparatively short time as a result of the attitudes of the other children. A child who had just cured herself of rather persistent day-wetting was heard to remark in respect of the accident of another child, "We don't wet ourselves in the nursery school." As the teachers carefully refrain from comments this would seem to be an interpretation on the child's part of the social custom of the group in which she was placed and which she had unhesitatingly accepted as a necessary part of her surroundings. In such cases concerning voluntary control of bodily functions social suggestion can be highly useful, though often misused. It is rather when we turn to play and work attitudes where originality is essential to the growth and satisfaction both of the individual and of the group that one could wish to see as little social pressure as possible and as much freedom as the child can use. In this way alone may we hope to develop those ways of doing and feeling, those elements of form and style as Watson has described them, which are characteristic traits of the child's personality.

Training for Moral Traits.

Accepting the inevitability of moral standards, and the child's suggestibility, which makes him a ready subject to such influences, it remains to see what types of moral influence the home generally exerts on the child. It would seem to us that the standards which the home atmosphere conveys in respect of honesty, truthfulness, and respect and consideration for others are of the greatest importance to the social development of the child. Needless to say these complex relationships are not inborn in the individual but are built up through a "give and take" process of learning.

Honesty. The child will know whether we are honest or not without our telling him. He will find this out from our treatment of others, but much more from our treatment of him. Do we cheat on trains and street cars, telling the child to "sit low" in order to avoid paying a fare for him? Will we smuggle goods, keep parcels which by an oversight have not been paid for, attempt in this way and that to get something for nothing? Do we meet our obligations fairly with the child? If he is responsible for tasks in the household, are we scrupulous in asking only the agreed amount of work or do we try to slip a little more over on him? One could go on multiplying such examples. It seems worth while to preserve, at cost to our own convenience, the child's strong sense of fairness. That can be done only if we are fair in our dealings with him, and make it always clear that we take the same for granted from him.

Truthfulness. If we tell the maid to say that we are out when we are in the house, if we are lavish in regrets in declining an invitation over the telephone, and then turn away to remark on our escape from the "old bore," it is useless to expect a truth-telling attitude from our children. They have had demonstrated to them that untruthfulness is used as a form of protection in social life. As children feel inadequate and weak in relation to adults who exercise compulsions, they are only too ready to adopt lying as a means of defending themselves against those more powerful than they. Do we answer the questions of children with truth or with a convenient fiction? Or, worst of all, do we use untruths as a means of coercion? An instance of this sort recently was reported when a child was brought to a hospital for a minor operation. He was a boy of nine years of age, but he had to be carried by main force into the hospital, and for some time he was so violent that it was impossible to get him to bed. Finally he calmed down a little and the nurse managed to get from him the story of the subterfuge used upon him. He had been invited to go fishing, had dug the worms and got ready his fishing tackle, and it was only when they reached the hospital that he realized how grossly he had been deceived. He had no objection to having an operation, but his indignation at the swindle which had been perpetrated on him was enormous. When his mother came to see him after the operation, he turned his back on her with the comment, "I'll never believe a word you say to me again." It is difficult to see how that mother could ever live down the impression which she had given her child, probably quite unwittingly or at least with good intention but with no realization of the havoc she was working.

Respect and Consideration for Others. This is one of the most intangible but pervasive influences of the home. How do parents behave to their inferiors and superiors? Are they ready to flatter those a step above them in the social scale, do they look for friends for their children among people who have money or social position? What standards do they apply in the choice of their own friends? Again, how are servants treated in the house? Are their comforts and pleasures considered, or are they treated in a domineering fashion, and made use of for the convenience of those who are in control? The kind of treatment which children give to servants will be conditioned by the attitudes which they have absorbed from their parents. If the family circle is permeated by an atmosphere of thoughtfulness and consideration for others, children will come to share this attitude without knowing that they have it.

It should be remarked in passing that this does not involve slackness in what is expected of people. Coupled with the attitude of consideration should go one of obligation of all persons under the family roof to contribute their peculiar share to the common good. It is important that this sense of obligation should be early developed in children, that they should be made responsible for certain tasks and held to their performance. If the general attitude of the family is one of recognizing obligation, children will receive a strong impulse in the same direction. Such a sense of honor is a blending of honesty and consideration. It involves punctuality, prompt discharge of promises at the time agreed, and a general readiness to do one's part, with a corresponding expectation of the same coöperation from other members of the group.

Adult Prestige.

We have spoken of the child's ready suggestibility which makes the absorption of adult attitudes easy and indeed inevitable. In respect of parents this suggestibility hinges upon the prestige which the adult holds for the child. We are all suggestible in relation to those whom we recognize as our unquestioned superiors. The child is in many ways overawed by the prestige of the adults among whom he lives. They are bigger than he, and physical size is in itself an element which compels attention. They are stronger, and in many situations the child is acutely conscious of this strength, as when he turns to it for protection, or when it is exerted to make him do something which he does not want to do. Clothes, again, constitute an important difference; the clothes of the adult are bigger, better, and different from those of the child. The little boy who gets pants for the first time is definitely aware of the reënforcement of his personality because he has begun to put on adult forms of dress. The little girl gets into her mother's powder jar or annexes her lip-stick for the same reason—she gets a vicarious experience of grown-up-ness, and tries thereby to lessen the psychic distance between adults and herself.

Similarly, the age of the adult gives him a powerful advantage. The intense interest which children show in age comparisons reflects their vague awareness of this fact. "Tell me your age, and I will tell you mine," a small child said to her mother. The same child, who is the youngest of the family, is extremely interested in comparing her age with that of her sisters, both as regards past, present, and a projection into the future. Her preoccupation with age would seem to indicate that she feels her position as the youngest member of the family and is wondering what she can do to offset it.

Then, adults have experience and skill that the child cannot hope to compete with. They may have crossed the continent, or the ocean; their memory runs back to the "old-fashioned time"; they have an awareness of facts and personalities with which the child is only fancifully becoming acquainted. It is often amusing to see how children try to reënforce their position by the chance bits of more extended experience that have come their way: "Well, anyway, I have slept in a sleeping-car," "I have stayed up till twelve o'clock" or, in protest, "I have never been off the North American continent," are random selections illustrating the child's attempt to fortify his personality with adult experiences. "My father can do that" may be a boast on one child's part in relation to another, but it implies also the recognition of the greater skill of the adult. "I can't do it, but my sister can," expresses the same recognition of greater attainment and perhaps of family pride. Examples might be multiplied indefinitely to show how much the child is dominated by the recognition of superior ability.

Probably one of the first tragic moments of the child's experience is when he realizes that his parents are not all-powerful; that they cannot mend the broken flower or recover the boat that has drifted too far out on the lake. It is important that parents should not magnify this crisis by pretending to a power that they do not possess. We are neither all-powerful nor all-wise, and children are sure to find this out, sooner or later. It is much safer not to pretend to a wisdom or certainty which we do not possess; we shall have less to undo as our children grow in insight. Prestige founded on fact cannot be damaging; the child may find in it strength and reënforcement to carry him through the early stages of learning when he has to have some one to fall back on. But prestige which is assumed can only spell disillusionment and disappointment for ourselves and the child. We should pretend to be neither braver, wiser, nor better than we are; although we may strive for a real growth in these qualities for the sake of the child. Our imperfect attainments and, above all, the fact that we are not finished products or satisfied with ourselves, but that we are trying just as he is, although a little farther along the way, will be a safer ground on which to build for guidance by prestige than will any attempt at infallibility. We can then lead in Meyer's sense of making disciples.

Types of Home.

Such being in general the way in which the home acts upon the child, it remains to single out some of the more specific adult influences which tend to produce specific reactions in the behavior of children. It would seem that most homes incline to fall under one or the other of two general types as regards that pervasive something which, for want of a better word, is usually termed atmosphere. The home may on the whole convey the impression of strife, of conflict, of unsettlement and restlessness, or it may convey the opposite impression, of serenity, and security. Such terms, vague as they are, seem to us to indicate something of infinitely greater importance than the physical conditions or the economic or social status in which the family is living. One can live in a small house, even in a room, and be a well-adjusted personality; one can even conceivably live in a dirty or untidy house without suffering mental deformity. But it is difficult to conceive how a child can grow up in an atmosphere of bickering and discontent without receiving injuries which will remain as scars or as open sores. Some few people may be immune to social tension, others may be able to develop their own antidotes, but the majority will hardly escape without traces of what they have had to suffer.

Conflict in the Home.

The well-adjusted home is the one we hear little about and indeed do not adequately understand. The mental hygiene of the future must lay more stress on this positive approach—what makes homes succeed? Meanwhile may we begin from the negative side—the home in distress? What are some of the factors which pollute home atmosphere?

Tension. Tension shows mainly as a disturbance in the normal rhythms of emotional experience, marked by the pitch and persistence of these states with consequent effects on the behavior of all within range. This state of instability may be due to various factors including those of fatigue or ill health. Fatigue may be from overwork, the mother being driven by tasks beyond her capacity to plan and accomplish in easier ways. Again, mental conflict, dissatisfaction with herself or with her surroundings, may be the cause of the fatigue. The person who is always tired is almost sure to be a prey to some sort of mental conflict. Usually not the physical symptoms of tiredness but the mental causes of unrest must be dealt with in order to relieve the emotional state. The tiredness which results from hard work in which one finds satisfaction is actually not unpleasant as it permits of real relaxation; the tiredness which we all dread is that feeling of incapacity which seems to prevent us from ever doing anything in which we can take real pride and satisfaction.

Ill health or disease may cause or may augment emotional tension. We all know how much a toothache or even a common cold can color our mental attitude. Strains which we bear easily when we are well become intolerable when they are superimposed on illness. Often physical disease but more often those ailments sometimes loosely described as "nervous," contribute to states of tension. Such disorders may range all the way from worry or anxiety over trifles to definitely psychotic states so extreme that the individual may temporarily have to be cared for outside the home situation. It is not the purpose of this book to analyze these conditions but merely to point out the marked effect on the child of states of tension in the parent. Thus, if the mother is over-tired and irritable, the child is almost sure to reflect that irritability. Cameron comments on the complications which infest this situation: *

> "Some of us are apt to find our children tiring. Their presence gets a little on our nerves. At times almost all that we say to them is a reproof, an expostulation, a forbidding. We seem to be issuing orders all the time, and yet they are orders which we feel have but a small chance of being obeyed. No doubt parents are at their worst in this respect when they are tired or worried, and it is not only what is said but the tone in which it is said that reacts upon the child. Children have no knowledge of the moods of their parents, though they may respond to them with almost uncanny certainty. There are many sensitive children who scent at once any nervous tension in the air."

Again, if tension takes the form of worry, expressed in over-solicitude for the child, the child's freedom of movement is apt to be hampered at every turn by prohibitions, warnings, precautions as to extra clothing, special foods and so forth. This may make the child dependent and timid, or he may react with annoyance towards the fretting restrictions that are laid upon him. Tantrums are one of the commonest forms of protest on the child's part against a too tense and irksome régime.

Lastly, if the parent's behavior becomes highly non-adaptive, analogous forms of reaction may be generated in the child as with cases of hysterical vomiting in children which have come on file in our consultation service. Whether or how far such mental contagion might ultimately contribute towards mental disease is a technical question that awaits investigation. From the practical standpoint induced tensions in the child are dealt with either by removing the child from the disturbing environment, if this is feasible, or by reëducating the adult in whom tension is causing the difficulty. In any event, the treatment of the child should be secondary to the attempt to deal with the trouble at its source, that is in the parent.

Parental Compensations. The parent who is unsatisfied either in marital adjustments or in social or economic ambitions is apt to attempt to compensate by demanding from the child those things which her own experience has denied. Thus she may make excessive demands on their affections to make up for what is lacking in her husband's attitude. She will probably rationalize this as a desire to keep her children with her, to bring them up in a more gentle fashion than the children of her neighbors, etc. She does not realize that in depriving them of opportunities for contact with their own generation she is making the social adjustments of adult life almost incredibly difficult for them. In somewhat similar fashion the parent may seek to increase his own sense of power and importance by keeping his children dependent on him. This with the mother may take the form of fastidious physical care and protection. The father is more likely to use financial dependence as a means of reënforcing his feeling of superiority. Again, the adult who has failed to realize a cherished ambition may try to deflect the child's career in that direction in order that he may experience vicariously in the child what has been denied to him. These instances are only some of the legion of ways in which parents' lack of adjustment may be reflected unwittingly in their treatment of their children. Through them all runs the common quality of using the child to compensate for a deficiency that affects the parent rather than of trying to discover and minister to the child's needs.

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* *The Nervous Child,* pp. 56-7.

Parental disagreement is another potent indirect influence which disturbs the life of the growing child. There is a remarkable series of novels, translated from the Dutch of Couperus, called the Books of the Small Souls. They are the history of a Dutch family of conservative trends in which the central figure is a boy, the son of parents who spend their life in perpetual bickerings and disputes. The child is often the center of these differences, since he is the one common interest which holds the parents together. The development of his character under such stresses is a study of unusual interest. He becomes a strong, self-contained, but never very happy man; one is made to feel that both his strength and unhappiness are products of his childhood experiences.

Favoritism is also a common cause of disturbance in the home. The jealous child is frequently the product of such an environment. In his excellent chapter on Jealousy,* Thom illustrates with a wealth of examples how jealousies, thoughtlessly fostered in early childhood, may cripple the individual in mature life. To quote:

> "It is the jealous child who becomes the jealous man or woman. As a child he encounters innumerable difficulties in getting on with his playmates. Because of this he develops a sense of failure and shame which is a tremendous handicap. He feels wronged and neglected; he has missed a 'square deal.' His self-centeredness becomes more marked and he draws away from his playmates and the activities of life thoroughly discouraged: or he may become domineering and pugnacious in an effort to gain attention for himself. Later in life this emotion causes an inability to share the joys of others, and makes it impossible to see others succeed without manifesting open resentment. The jealous person becomes an object of dislike. Often he develops ideas that he is unjustly treated or persecuted; and all too frequently the jealousy ends in uncontrolled resentment with disastrous results."

This chapter on jealousy, together with Thom's earlier chapter on the Parent-Child Relationship, should be read with care as important contributions to the topic under discussion.

Lack of Management. Lastly, a general atmosphere of confusion, disorder, lack of planning, will augment the elements of conflict in the home situation. If meals are never ready on time, if the quarters of the family are always in disorder, the children are apt to reflect this absence of plan or responsibility with a similar carelessness. They will stay out to all hours, turning up for meals or going to bed when they happen to remember and want to. Similarly, their native resistance to tidiness will be increased if they are not habitually surrounded with orderly associations. Regularity and order in the management of the home constitutes in itself a strong impulsion towards a like attitude in the child.

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* *Everyday Problems of the Everyday Child*, p. 179.

Serenity in the Home.

Let us turn from the effects of a poor home atmosphere to consider the positive side of the picture and attempt to envisage some of the factors which constitute serenity in the home. It is hardly necessary to point out the implications for the child's well-being of such an atmosphere of security and calm. This we all admit; what is harder to know is how to produce it.

A Good Adjustment Between Parents is probably the most important ingredient of a serene home atmosphere. It influences the children indirectly but in a variety of ways. It is the foundation of their sense of security and stability; it lends strength to affection; it is also the condition that best favors freedom for the child to grow and develop in his own way. If parents are satisfied in their own deepest needs, realizing a relation of equality and equanimity, they will not feed upon their children's affections as a substitute; they can give freely, asking nothing. To get on well with our spouse is perhaps the greatest single contribution we can make to the mental health of our children.

The sense of security is as important for the child in his circle as for the adult in his but from a different angle. To the child hazards concerning employment, finance, health, etc., are less real than psychological ones. What he most needs is the knowledge and assurance that he really "belongs," that he is one with others and may unquestionably share in their fortunes, good or ill. His is a security that relies on the solidarity of his group—a phase of the herd instinct. The principle of sharing is an important means of strengthening this type of security for children. Consequently they should not be shielded from their parents' worries, especially if it is a matter which will affect them, such as a necessary reduction of living expenses. At the same time, needless anxiety is sometimes occasioned in children when parents talk before them of their financial straits. The parents may know quite well that they will weather the storm, they may be more or less facetious but at the same time the child may take it all in deadly earnest and suffer real distress at the thought that they may be about to lose their home, to have no more money for food and clothes, etc. Parents should remember to measure the child's outlook on security in terms of his capacity for understanding.

Confidence. That the child should grow up with complete trust in his parents is a further aid to good adjustment, provided that that trust is deserved. Sincerity in our dealings with our children is always the basis for the attitude of confidence. At all stages of development the child should feel that there is some one in whom he may confide. Not insisting that the child should tell us everything, but being ready to listen when he wants to tell us something, even though that something may appear quite trivial from an adult level, is a safe way of keeping open the channel of communication between parent and child. In addition to this a detached and unemotional attitude, a williness to give advice without strings attached to make the child follow it, will allow one to exert a telling influence which will be all the more powerful in that it carries with it no element of constraint.

But if the child is to learn to trust the parent, it is indispensable that the parent should trust the child. Fear makes for distrust; it is often our anxiety that children should not err that makes us suspicious of their behavior. Probably most parents have had the experience of being apprehensive over something that the child has done, only to find that their fears were groundless, that the child had been actuated by unimpeachable motives. One then feels ashamed of one's suspicions. Distrust of the child is fundamentally distrust of ourselves and of the methods we have used in training him. If we have honestly done our best we should be ready to trust as to the outcome. A suspicious attitude, a nosing into the child's affairs, is absolutely subversive of a spirit of confidence. We must trust the child and respect his reticences—anything in the nature of an inquisition or forced confessional will destroy all freedom in the relationship between parent and child.

"Secrets" play a large part in the child's thinking, and when he tells us a secret it is a moral obligation to keep that secret, not to repeat it with an amused gesture to the next person who comes on the scene. It is after all surprising that children trust us as much as they do when we consider how frequently we violate their confidences. The child himself has little continence as regards secrets; it is amusing to watch him struggling to suppress some quite simple bit of news, and finally bursting forth with it when he can contain himself no longer. It is important that we should set him an example in this respect instead of emulating his practice.

Similarly with promises which parents make to children. Nothing violates the child's code so completely as a promise which is not fulfilled. For this reason adults should be extremely careful in making promises to children or suggestions which they may interpret as promises even when there seems no obvious reason why these cannot be discharged. Adults understand the exigencies which make change of plan necessary; the child sees only that he has been foiled in some expected pleasure. His faith in the adults' good faith is thereby undermined.

Humor. Little as is known about humor from the standpoint of theory, we all know its effects in practice. If it is not malicious, if it means an attitude shared instead of an attempt to put oneself in a position of superiority to the child, it is a most effective means of reducing tension and making for easy pleasant relationships. Children and adults differ noticeably in their sense of humor, the physically grotesque and incongruous appeals to the child. He stands on the level of the plate-throwing, Mutt and Jeff type of humor. More subtle nuances of behavior amuse the adult, particularly discrepancies in child behavior where at one minute he shows a flash of insight beyond his years and at the next relapses into childish absurdity. Children themselves recognize this difference in sense of humor. For example, a child began to tell her mother of the "funniest thing" that had happened at school—the children had been throwing coats around the room. Suddenly she checked herself: "Oh, you will not think this funny, but Joan will," and she finished the narrative to her younger sister.

Despite this difference in what amuses, there are many experiences which adults and children do share. There are certain people, also, who have the happy gift of a humorous attitude, so that one feels this spirit radiate and stress lessen as soon they enter a situation. Such restorers of domestic serenity are largely unconscious agents, whether it is that they are well-adjusted themselves and so at peace and pleased with the world, or whatever the cause may be, they act as solvents of domestic strife and help to make others feel at ease and at their best.

This facilitating attitude should be clearly distinguished from that of the professional fun-maker, the joker who over-stimulates children, by teasing, romping, tickling, or by attempts to amuse them with fantastic tricks. Such over-stimulation may be intensely enjoyed by children and may still be harmful. It disrupts rather than furthers good adjustment in the home. It is apt to pass over into a sort of "rough-house" which in some obscure way provides satisfaction to the adult but which exhausts and finally annoys the child.

Considerateness in the treatment of children might seem to be a quality that could be taken for granted, yet actually it is honored more in the breach than in the observance. The basis of considerateness would seem to involve regarding the child as an equal. This should not be construed to mean equal in experience, as that, of course, would be an absurdity. But we can regard children as our equals in the sense that they have the same impulses, and that they are traveling with us towards the same goals. Potentially if not actually they are our equals, possibly our superiors. The condescending and sentimental tone with which adults commonly address children is therefore an insult to their personality and intelligence as well as an unwitting judgment on our own. An amusing reflex of this talking-down attitude was shown in the nursery school when a group of parents were making observations. They had been asked not to talk to the children and one of them construed this so literally that when a child stopped in front of her to say, "What is your name?" she did not answer.

"What is your name?" repeated the child.

Again no response; the parent went on writing.

"What is your name?" still more insistently, then, in disgust as she walked away, "I guess that lady has lost her tongue!"

A few simple practical rules may suggest what considerateness implies in our dealings with children. If we scrutinize our procedures in the light of these rules we may realize that while simple, they are not always easy.

Do not "show off" your child by putting him through parlor tricks for the benefit of strangers. You will either embarrass him, or, what is worse, make him want to show off and call attention to himself.

Avoid discussing children in their hearing, especially repeating the "cute" things that they have said, or the naughty things they have done. The veiled references of parents in the presence of children are as absurd as they are palpably ineffective to cloak our intent from the child.

Treat children with courtesy: This point has already been discussed from various angles and needs no further emphasis but only application.

Be ready to share the child's experience: Porter Lee has remarked on the fatal ingenuity which the child seems to display for demanding our coöperation at inconvenient times. Probably the child would say the same of our demands on him. When two people are pursuing different ends with enthusiasm, they find it difficult to make their common interests synchronize. The parent is the one who must exercise forbearance and restraint on his own interests in such a situation. Absolutely, what he is doing may be much more important; for the development of the child, attention to his needs when he asks for it may be of the first importance.

OUTLINE VII

ADULT INFLUENCE—UNWITTING

I. The Home Atmosphere dependent on:
  Conventions—manners.
  Moral standards—honesty,
    —truthfulness,
    —considerateness.
  Adult prestige due to—size and strength,
    —age and experience,
    —skill.

II. Conflict in the Home occasioned by:
  Tension—emotional instability due to—fatigue,
    —ill health.
  Parental compensations,
  Parental disagreements,
  Favoritism,
  Lack of Management.

III. Serenity in the Home achieved through:
  Good adjustment between parents assures—sense of security,
    —freedom.
  Confidence—respecting the child's secrets,
    —keeping promises.
  Humor.
  Consideration—avoid "showing off" children,
    —do not discuss children in their presence,
    —treat children with courtesy,
    —be ready to share the child's experience.

IV. References:
  Anderson and Foster—*The Young Child and His Parents.* Introduction.
  Groves, Ernest—*The Drifting Home.* Chapter VIII.

V. Questions:

1. How can adults learn to manage their tensions?
2. What place has recreation in establishing good rapport between parent and child?

ILLUSTRATIONS VII

I. *Changing the Parent.*

"I have had occasion to observe myself since I have been studying for this paper (on tantrums). I have made a great difference in my child already by changing my own attitude. She does with her doll just what she sees me doing with her. If I am calm she reacts in the same way."

"I can usually find what I think is the reason of my child's misbehavior. Sometimes she is hungry or tired, but more often her tantrums have been a reflection of my own nervous, uncontrolled state. I now spend less energy on managing the child and more on preventing upsets in myself."

II. *Manners.*

Social Forms:

"I find that when the children are at table we are always checking up on their manners. We have four children and so have much experience. It is 'Hold your fork properly' or 'Sit up properly.' So in order to have peace for us and for them I usually give them their dinner alone. They come in for dinner on Sunday, and we try to ignore most of their mistakes. I worry such a lot about their behavior in other houses. I tell them, 'If you do that when you go out you will mortify mother.' But I've been told their manners are good when they're out."

First Parent (apropos of three years being too early to stress manners): "Suppose a three-year-old has just acquired, without being definitely taught, the habit of saying 'Thank you'?"
Leader: "That is fine as long as you haven't insisted upon it."
Second Parent: "What do you think about saying a thing for a child by way of suggestion, like, 'Thank you, Mother,' when a child has handed you something?"
Leader: "I don't think it is wise. It is right for you to say 'Thank you' *to* them, but not *for* them."

"I know that I can master my child by the old methods. Once when I was going out and my child cried I took off my coat and spanked her. I did this five times until she would say, 'Good-by, mother, have a good time,' as I told her."

Question: How did unwitting influence work against witting in this instance?

Behavior to Visitors:

"I know a child of four who went to bed without ice cream although she was crazy about it, because her mother had asked her to do something. I think the mother was wrong. She asked her to be polite and curtsey to a visitor, in order to get ice cream. The child went to bed without the ice cream. It was not contrariness but a sense of injustice, and it prevailed."

"Should children be disturbed for guests who come from a distance? It has happened that we have had five such visitors recently. Twice the child liked being interrupted and brought to see them and several times he was angry."

Comment: This child was under two years.

"My oldest boy is three and after his afternoon nap he was brought into the room where a friend of mine was sitting. He wouldn't come in but went upstairs and lay on his bed. Even a lollipop the friend had brought wouldn't get him to go into the room. Bruce will come into the room with most people. I don't know why he didn't this time, but he just took a look at her and walked right away. He played quite contentedly in his playroom. I was wondering if I did right in not making him come in but I was sure there would have been a scene."

Question: How much social compliance should be expected of pre-school children?

"Guests and Gentlemen."

"We had a sweet child close to us. She was told when she was hostess she must be very pleasant to the visitors and if the guests wanted something it was her place to give up everything to them. The child did not take to it always, but you can teach a child anything. Then she was told, 'When you go somewhere you must act very nicely. You must be on your best behavior.' Whenever she was playing with children she was either hostess or guest, only she reversed the rôles. She came over to our place frequently. When Jane went over there Susanne would take anything she wanted and when Jane protested, would say, 'Jane, you are a little guest, you must take what you get and be glad of it.' Then when the child came to our place, when she wanted a toy and took it, and Jane cried, the visitor said, 'You ought not to cry, you are hostess, I am guest. You should treat me very nicely.' Jane thought this was too much. I interfered and said, 'You play together too much. You are not hostess and also guest. We take turns at toys.' I called her mother and told her. She had not realized her training was developing that attitude."

"Do you think boys should be allowed to hit girls back when they are playing together? You say, 'You cannot play with that girl because she hits you, and boys do not hit girls back. Boys should be little gentlemen.' "

"I heard one little girl who was visiting say, 'Remember, I'm your little guest, and you must do what I want.' "

"My neighbor's little boy and mine play together pretty well, and then go at each other with blocks. I interfere; they look dangerous. His mother takes him in and says, *'Be a little gentleman!'* When the maid is with him they play all right—when the mother's there they fight."

Apologies:

First Parent: "I have trouble all the time with my boy of six when he doesn't get his own way. About a month ago he had a quarrel with his cousin, who is four. The cousin knocked down a snowman my boy had made, and he was so mad that he knocked the little boy down and in doing so cut his face with some ice. I brought him in and made him sit on a chair. In the end he apologized."

Leader: "Voluntarily, or did you make him?"

First Parent: "No, I didn't make him, but I asked him if he didn't want to."

Second Parent: "I should like to go back to that question that was raised before about the little boy of six and his cousin of four. Don't you think that it was the child of four who should have been punished instead of the older child? He had no right to knock down the snowman."

Leader: "What do you think about letting children settle their own differences unless there is a considerable difference in their ages?"

Second Parent: "I wouldn't agree with that; I think that children need the guidance of adults."

"Janet, aged three and a half, was being taken to a party with a neighbor and her little daughter. I was not ready, so they took her out to the car where my neighbor and the other little girl were waiting. At first Janet went willingly, but when she got to the car, she threw herself on the floor and screamed. When I came out she repeated the performance, lying screaming on the walk. Finally I took her in and put her to bed. She said she was frightened. Should I take Janet to the neighbor and make her apologize for the way in which she behaved?"

Question: What attitude should parents take in regard to demanding apologies from children?

Rudeness:

First Parent: "How are you going to teach a child to be respectful if you allow him to make faces at you?"

Leader: "That is an easy one. You have to deserve respect. And the making of faces has nothing to do with respect. Most of our children behave much better outside of the home than in it."

Second Parent: "But suppose a child should refuse to go to his room, what then?"

Leader: "How old a child?"

Second Parent: "Six years."

Leader: "That is something that should be built up from the beginning. It hinges on the question of how you are going to make them respect you. It is a matter of how consistent you have been in seeing that they went to their rooms."

Second Parent: "I have one who will go but will make it very nasty."

Leader: "You can't altogether blame him for that."

Third Parent: "My little girl will go but will make a face on the way."

Leader: "Why not? She has not yet learned all the gestures she might use! Ignore it. Such things never persist if they are ignored."

Third Parent: "I made a face too just to show her what it looked like."

Leader: "Oh, no! Ignore it absolutely. As soon as you take cognizance of it you lower yourself to that level. Suppose Lloyd George were to be concerned if some one made a face at him in an address. You should feel the same way. If they go up to their room, it is all right."

"Children are so much nicer than we are. When they ask us to do things we say, 'In a minute,' but when we call them we say, 'Come at once,' and they usually come."

Question: How would you compare the attitude of this parent with those of the three parents in the dialogue above?

III. *Parental Compensations.*

"Often you see poor people struggling and insisting on giving their children a musical education without any regard as to whether there is any music in the child or not. The mother may have wanted to become a great musician or actress and when she couldn't, she wants to see her children live the life she wanted rather than their own."

"My father was denied in his youth the educational facilities we have to-day, and I really believe his insistence on our education was just a living through us of what he would have liked to have done. In our case, his demands and standards were such as to make a sister of mine detest school so much that after taking one year at High, she refused to go back and came away to the city, where she began work at an early age, just for the satisfaction of living as she wanted to. She was not as successful at school as either myself or the sister younger than herself."

IV. *Dependence of Children on Parents.*

"When I was a child (I was an only child) my mother was very demonstrative. They used to say that I was all right when

I was playing with other children, and would be all right until my mother appeared. Then I'd develop a headache in order to have my mother pet me. I was used to it and I demanded it."

"My husband is undemonstrative and objects to my demonstrativeness with our child. My husband thinks I'm spoiling the child for the hard knocks of the world. But don't the boy and I both need it?"

V. *Reflections of Parental Attitudes.*

"Billie is only five and he acquired a very terrible vocabulary listening to older boys. There is a gang near us. During the summer when he hears it he comes in and says these swear words. We have not paid any attention. Now during the winter he does not use them at all."

"My little boy was kicked by another boy at school. I asked him, when he told me, what he was going to do about it and he said he was going to wait till he could *find a kind way to make the boy stop kicking him.* I don't want my youngster to take it all and don't want him to turn into a tattletale."

Question: Is this a natural or an inspired attitude in a child?

"My life is made miserable by one child of four and a half who plays with my children. All the other children are smaller than she, and she interferes with them and teases the puppy. Her parents say, 'Oh, she's a lovely child. She may be spunky but she's a lovely child!' You should see her play! I feed my children cod liver oil and will wait till they're big enough to beat her up!"

"I notice that if I am considerate with George he is the same with his sister. He doesn't slap her or take things away from her. Before Christmas we were listening to Santa Claus over the radio. Mary wasn't interested and was banging her heels on the floor. George stood it for a while; then he went over to her with a rug, saying, 'Here, stand on this.' "

"I was called to the phone and left Mary at the dinner table. When I came back I found that she had been spilling the sugar and had mussed up the dishes and tablecloth. I was annoyed and picked her up and spanked her. That afternoon she wet the bed, a thing she never does. George said, 'Serves you right, you shouldn't have spanked her.' "

VI. *Jealousy.*

"My little girl of two and a half is jealous of the baby, who is thirteen months old. On some occasions she is lavish in her affection, but on others, if she is not watched, she will hit him."

"Would it be jealousy that causes a child who is liked by adults to be disliked by other children? There is a boy on our street whom all the mothers like so well, and we are probably continually telling our children if they could only keep their clothes as nicely as Sam does and be as courteous as Sam is, etc. He is just the sort of boy that appeals to adults but the boys think he is sneaky."

"I have a little boy who used to go into tantrums. He is practically over that stage but is showing anger in another way which I am helpless before. He runs to the baby, grabs her and shakes her and hits her. Sometimes he takes her hand and holds it tight. Other times if not caught he will take her hand and press it down hard in the cot. It makes the baby cry and I run to the baby. When put to bed at night he is at the age where he decides he wants to get up and go to the bathroom, or wants a drink, having had all this attention before. He will slip into the baby's room and give her a poke."

"When my little boys are home together the little one is jealous of the older one. One day I was playing with them in the hallway and I hurt the little one. I went and took the little fellow up and petted him and tried to bring him around. The other lad came along and said, 'I do not like him.' I said, 'Bobby is your brother.' He said, 'He is not my brother at all. You love him and you do not love me like that.' "

"I am an only child and possibly ties between brothers and sisters are idealized by me because I haven't any. My little girl was three years and eight months old when the baby came, and during the next two years I had so much to do to take care of the little one that I may have neglected her. When the baby was six weeks old she began to give me trouble, and if

I could have realized then the things I know now, I am sure that things would not have come to such a state where they must be jealous of each other and tease each other so unmercifully as they did."

CASE VII

Rose. Age 4/9 I.Q. 106.

Problem as stated by mother:

"Persistent Masturbation."

History:

Family life:

Father: Age 43—professional man.

Mother: Age 40—University graduate—anxious—apprehensive—only child.

Siblings: Brother—age 2.

Other persons in home: Maid—has little supervision of children.

Home: Duplex—lower—nine rooms—one sleeping room for children—separate playroom.

Obstetrical history: Difficult long labor—high forceps.

* Developmental history: Breast fed for one month—mother sent away for "nervous breakdown" for three months—child bottle fed till eleven months—pyelitis at six months.

Attitudes: Nothing unusual.

Motor: Late.

Speech: Average.

Eating: Difficulty at eleven months with solid food—urging employed—no forced feeding—no trouble at present—feeds self.

Elimination—Occasional enuresis.

* Sleep: Regular hours—rests in afternoon but does not sleep—mother sits beside bed so that child will not masturbate—mother goes into room several times at night to lay her on her back if she is "rocking."

Play: Plays with younger brother—often sits in corner, apparently masturbating.

* Sex: When child was ill in infancy, there was apparently a good deal of local irritation, with handling of parts in bath and when undressed—mother was "horrified" upon her re-

turn home to find this behavior—occasional slapping and tying of hands—later, scolding and lecturing—at night the child began to rock back and forth on its hands and knees—mother always went in to her and laid her on her back.

Emotions: Rather a placid child—no serious temper outbreaks—timid of dogs.

Self-tendencies: Child does not play well with other children—apparently does not busy herself with toys for any length of time—does not cry easily—does not lie about masturbation—sucks her thumb.

* Discipline: Regular routine of the home is fair—occasional corporal punishment—atmosphere is hectic at times with violent quarrels between husband and wife about the children.

Diagnosis.

The mother admits that she herself had no sex education whatever and that she learned about masturbation from a neighbor who had observed her child. This neighbor told her of all the evils inherent in the practice (as neighbors do), and the mother became more and more apprehensive. She discussed the condition with no one except her husband, who, instead of taking the opportunity of enlightening her, simply told her not to worry. This is sound advice, but, unfortunately, she did not take it. Her own attitude towards the habit made it impossible for her to deal with the situation in any way that would lead to a satisfactory adjustment on the part of the child.

Recommendations.

The first task was to instruct the mother. This was done by talks and suggested reading and a discussion with the father of his responsibility in the situation.

The mother was urged to ignore the child's behavior—to see that there was no local irritation and if she was not satisfied re this aspect of the case, to take the child to her family physician for examination and urinanalysis. This was done and the findings were negative.

Under no circumstances was she to interrupt the child's sleep for this reason, and if the child was seen to be "daydreaming," a suggested game or activity might be introduced, but as casually as possible. No mention of the practice was to be made except in the nature of instruction, as learned from the readings, and then only when the opportunity arose, if questions were initiated by the child.

Under no circumstances deal with the younger as she had with the older child.

Results.

The mother came to the office every week for six weeks for discussion, at the end of which time she was asked whether the child was still masturbating. Her answer was significant: "I occasionally see her daydreaming at her play, but not so often. I don't know whether she does it at night now or not. I go to bed and go to sleep."

Note.

This unwitting influence of the parent with reference to sex cannot be overestimated, nor can the influence of sex instruction and a reasonable attitude be ignored. Another case, more severe than the above, in which the practice was condoned by the grandmother of the child in question (a portion of the underwear had been cut away so that the child could more easily manipulate) cleared up in less than a year when the child was removed from this home into an excellent foster home.

CHAPTER VIII

ADULT INFLUENCES—WITTING

If our unwitting influences are right, witting influences will to a considerable extent take care of themselves. There is however a difference. Unwitting influences, as we have seen, are concerned largely with customs and moral standards of the family—those things which are implied and accepted rather than consciously formulated. Witting influences apply rather to the accepted ideas and overt procedures of discipline, as practiced in the family. They are relatively the more obvious forms of control, though they depend ultimately on the more pervasive unwitting influences. They concern techniques of child-training rather than underlying attitudes between parents and children.

Types of Home Discipline.

Discipline in the family usually can be assigned to one of three types,—harsh, lenient and what, for want of a more accurate term, we may call reasonable. *Harsh discipline* is less common nowadays than in the past, though the records of a consultation service occasionally disclose surprising instances. Harsh discipline may take the form of physical punishment carried to extremes, so that the child sustains harmful injuries, or it may be of the fanatical type, the expression of some obsession on the part of the parent. Thus cleanliness may become a fetish, or tidiness, or the parent may be the prey of sex obsessions and may construe the most innocent behavior in such terms. Religion may become a mania, so that the child's freedom is curtailed and his life made miserable by a round of religious observances. All such forms are manifestations in the parent of disturbances of personality of a rather deep-seated sort. These would have to be adjusted before the child's behavior in itself could be dealt with.

There is, however, a less obvious type of harsh discipline than that which manifests itself in physical forms or fixed ideas; that is the repressive and forbidding influence of the "strict" parent who maintains a distance from his child, repulses confidences and represses all signs of sympathy in his own behavior towards his child. Such an attitude may have been assumed with a view to keeping the child in his place, believing this necessary for an effective discipline, or it may be merely the expression of particular personality traits which have previously become ingrained in the parent. Again it may reflect or may be construed as meaning that the child is unwanted. Whatever the cause, nothing could be worse for any child than to grow up in this cold and alien atmosphere which stifles all natural and spontaneous expression of affection.

A carry-over from their own early environment can frequently be traced in parents, who, having suffered in their childhood from excess or defect of affection, are trying to emulate or avoid this for their own children. Most frequently to-day, an extremely affectionate and even indulgent attitude rather than the harsh attitude is the result. This is but one form of the swing in our thinking from the "bad" to the "good" theory of human nature.

Indulgent Discipline.

Lenient management may take different forms, one of which is unusual indulgence. This often happens if there is a difference of opinion between parents as to the treatment of the child. If the father believes in old-fashioned methods of punishment and the mother is under the sway of new ideas in child training, the child may become the victim of parental disagreements in regard to his handling. Then the member of the family who favors mild measures is apt to try to shield the child from the punishments that the stricter parent would mete out. The consequences of this shielding may be much worse for the child than the actual punishments would have been.

Not infrequently a parent prefers one child, and that child is lightly dealt with for offenses that in the other children of the family would not be passed over. The situation is then complicated by the resentments that the less favored children store up against the Joseph in their midst. A grandparent or other relative not uncommonly introduces this element of strife by taking the part of one child. The special favors and protection that the child receives in this fashion are of questionable value to him and are more than offset by the disadvantages in relation to the other members of the family. The case history at the end of this chapter illustrates such a situation.

Indifferent Discipline.

Leniency may take the further form of indifference, expressing, perhaps, callousness on the part of the parent, or it may simply mean that the parent is too preoccupied with his own affairs to attend to the needs of the child. The notorious mother who spends her afternoons playing bridge while her children run the streets, is the stock example which is always held up to parents, but the father who is too absorbed in business to pay any attention to what happens to his children ought also to be arraigned under this count.

The common rationalization of some skeptics that parents who attend child study meetings would be better employed at home is gradually wearing thin, being replaced by serious reflection upon how to manage home affairs.

The household which revolves around the need of the parent so that the children must be kept quiet in order that father may work or may rest undisturbed is a common type of discipline which largely ignores the needs of the child. The woman who is so preoccupied in the care of her house that she has no time for her children, is another example of this type. Her intercourse with her children is largely in the form of prohibitions. "Do not tramp dirt on the clean floor," "Do not muss up the living room," "Are your hands clean enough to touch it?" It is impossible to build up a good family spirit on negative attitudes.

In this connection it is perhaps worth while to raise the question of whether a parent's time—particularly, a mother's—should be always at the disposal of her children. Should they be able to interrupt her at any time and place to claim attention for their needs, or should they learn to respect her interests and her privacies? Is the mother who, during the whole period of her children's public school careers, never failed to be waiting when they came home from school, the pattern to be followed? This question can best be answered in terms of what we want our conduct to mean to our child. If we wish them to understand that *they* are our exclusive interest, well and good; but if we prefer to have them realize that persons should have interests of their own, parents too, then we will teach them to respect such interests. To be away occasionally from our children, to teach them not to interrupt our work without good reason, is not to be indifferent to their needs; used with judgment, this has real disciplinary value. Indeed, it may be more valuable training for children to have the example of a parent who is at times absorbed in work than to have her always at the beck and call of their passing desires. This should not be construed to mean that any real need of the child will go uncared for, or that the family routine will give way before the interests of one member. It does mean that children should early learn to respect the preoccupations of other people, just as they themselves have a right to freedom at certain times from interruption.

The possession of independent interests by the parent may actually be a means of freedom for the child. If his parents are wholesomely absorbed in work or occasionally in recreation, the child has a chance to follow his own interests without fear of interruption or too constant supervision.

Evasive Discipline.

Another form of lenient discipline may merely represent the inability of the parent to come to grips with a situation;

her own mental inconclusiveness is reflected in her dealings with her children. She is always seeking the lazy way out of a difficulty. Thus she coaxes the child when he is unwilling to do what is expected of him instead of being firm and seeing that he does what she has asked. She refuses a request that the child makes, then yields when he is persistent in repeating his demands. She may even bribe the child to good behavior, "Come home and I will give you a candy," "Eat your dinner and I will take you to the movies." Again, conduct may be put on a personal basis, that is, the child may be urged to "be mother's good little boy," "Do this for mother" and so on, in situations where the child should act as a matter of course and not on the basis either of personal feeling or of bargaining.

Another device of the parent who is unsure of her own procedure is to make a game of the routine. Thus hands are washed to a song, children race to see who will be first in bed, they are told fantastic stories about the gay Mr. Carrot and the strong Mr. Spinach and so on. This habit will soon pall, both with mother and child. The chief objection to it is that the mother feels she is accomplishing something, whereas she is really taking a lazy and in the long run ineffective method of getting the child to do what she wants him to do. If the invention and ingenuity which go into fantastic methods of control were devoted first to trying to understand *why* the child wants to do some things and dislikes doing others, and then to a calm, consistent enforcement of the routine, the parent's task could be accomplished with infinitely less wear and tear on herself and on the child. Evasive discipline generally means either that the parent has not taken the trouble to think out the issues involved and proper measures for them or she is confused about what the issues really are.

A Reasonable Discipline.

When we turn to the third type, that of a reasonable discipline, it is perhaps harder to indicate what it is than what it is not. The matter may be approached indirectly by an analysis of the forms of control which the adult may use effectively in relation to the child. From these clues, we shall try to indicate some of the positive forms which a good discipline should take.

Forms of Adult Control.

The action of adults to children can conveniently be looked at from the two standpoints of stimulation and restraint. That is, they are trying to get children to do something or they are trying to stop them from doing something. Here again we are thinking in terms of the fundamental motor attitudes; though undoubtedly every situation of contact between adult and child has some sort of emotional cast. In other words, the adult is trying to get the child to feel with him or, on the other hand, is himself feeling annoyance and resistance to the child. This will be reflected in the child by the emotional states which either facilitate or hinder compliance with adult demands. And back of these emotional states and motor attitudes lie, of course, the basic physiological appetites of the child in respect of which his conduct is orientated and which the adult is trying to shape into forms which will chime with social conventions.

Adult Stimulation.

When the adult is trying to get the child to do a given thing, whether it be to eat his dinner, pick up his clothes or go to sleep, a variety of methods may be used to secure his coöperation. Thus one may begin with a command. This is the easiest and most obvious form of stimulation though it may be relatively ineffective. The adult command is an expression of the adult's superiority and dominance over the child. Such adult dominance is an undoubted fact and must not be allowed to be over-ridden, but to assert it too insistently may be to challenge the child's resistance; to set up an antagonistic instead of a facilitating or sympathetic response in his behavior. For this reason, it may be better to say, "Will you do this?" instead of, "Do this." But if we substitute requests for commands this must be more than a mere form. It is merely hiding the mailed fist in the velvet glove if we say, "Will you go upstairs and fetch my spectacles," and when the child says, "I don't want to," then we respond with, "But you've *got* to." Commands and requests should represent a real discrimination in the type of behavior expected of the child. If it is an occasion in which no leeway can be left to him in his responses, then our manner of asking should indicate this. It is possible to keep the emotional elements of a command in as low a key as possible. A calm expectation of compliance by the child in a routine situation, firmness and a quiet manner in stating what he is to do, will usually be more effective than emphatic commands. This, however, implies consistency of practice week in and week out, not just an occasional experiment.

There are, however, many situations in which the child may be left some freedom to comply or not, or to choose the manner of his compliance. Wherever possible this should be done, so that he should be as little conscious of adult authority as possible. Requests may be used, or the milder form of suggestion when we wish to secure a certain type of response. It is important for parents to realize the effectiveness of indirect methods of stimulation in situations other than the obvious routine ones when prompt compliance without question is essential. Suggestion may be either verbal in the way of a comment or motor in the sense that the adult does the thing which is desired in the child. The latter's strong imitative impulse is then called into play to contribute the desired type of behavior. Thus, if adults eat their food with relish, the child is apt to do the same. It should, however, be remarked in passing that this must be a genuine and not a forced attitude on the part of the adult. To set the stage by a series of remarks on how hungry you are, how good the dinner is to-day, etc., is apt to make the child smell a rat. Children are unusually canny in detecting design in our actions. It is better to be perfectly straightforward than to attempt to motivate the child by an elaborate camouflage of our intentions.

Help from the adult is another form of stimulation which must often be applied. This may take the form of verbal direction, or it may be by way of actual motor assistance, as in the nursery school when the teacher helps the two-year-old to carry his basin of water back and forth. This type of help is particularly significant as a means of initiating the child into those skills which are essential to his taking his place in the social order. While the child needs the sense of self-reliance and independence that comes from doing things for himself, he needs help in the beginning of a new process and should not be left to flounder alone without enough guidance to keep him on the path.

If we keep our idea of the authority of leadership clearly in mind it will help us to decide what type of control is relevant in a given situation. That is, we will not think simply of making the child do what we want him to do but of sharing experience with him, helping him to do what will be worth while for him. Leadership is often inconvenient, which is one reason why we use it so seldom. Take this simple illustration: a six-year-old child was asked to bring an apple from the cellar for his grandfather. He refused. The mother said quietly, "Come and we will get it together," and they went hand in hand to the cellar and fetched the apple, the child going with his mother with entire willingness. To command might have awakened resistance, to go for the child would have been unwise, to go *with* the child showed a willingness to participate in what was being asked of him; it secured the apple and something more. Readiness to share experience need not make the child dependent on adult initiative; but it does generate a genuine sympathy based on community of experience which we believe to be a necessary ingredient in leadership of a high type.

Use of Adult Stimulation.

The *amount* of adult stimulation that should be applied to children will differ markedly in relation to the part of the child's activity that is concerned and also to the stage of development and temperament of the individual child. In general, most adults say and do far too much with children. This is clearly demonstrated by the contrasting practice of the nursery school where the adults stay in the background as much as possible, only entering into the picture when the child appeals to them, when he is interfering in a serious way with the activities of another child or when he is wandering aimlessly about in evident need of direction. Newcomers in the nursery school situation, as visitors and students in training, are usually distinguishable by the tendency to inject themselves into the situation, to make a fuss over the child. This reflects the prevalent attitude of adults to children; it only stands out when viewed in contrast with the more restrained attitude of the trained worker.

Is this an attitude that it is possible or desirable to cultivate in parents? It is evident that the question with the teacher is simpler in many respects, in that she is less tied emotionally in the situation than is the parent. Her annoyance and impatience, also her preferences, are kept more strictly under control, partly because she is usually dealing with a group of children, partly because they are not her own children, but principally because she is dealing with them over a limited period and not as a steady job through their lives. Her attitude is often construed as cold and indifferent by those who are new to the situation. But if its intention is to allow freedom for the child it should not be thus misinterpreted. The parent's attitude is conventionally assumed to be one of devotion to the child, but an impartial survey of parents' behavior will reveal the fact that they are often irritable and that their displays of affection are often as much an indulgence of their own selfish motives as dictated by consideration of the child. If in each case, we ask ourselves what really ministers most to the good of the child, we may revise some of our views of the sort of treatment on which he thrives. Many children must welcome the detached and impartial atmosphere of the nursery school as a relief from the hothouse affection of the home situation. The school is often easier to adjust to than that of the home. This is not to say that the fact of the enduring background of affection which the parent alone supplies in not a thing of paramount value in the life of the child; we are speaking here of lesser values, of the technique to which the child is subjected. Affection should afford the background of security for the child's universe, but it should be a background, something taken for granted not something thrust overtly on him at all times.

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In commenting on the contrasts between the atmosphere of the nursery school and the home, Miss Johnson writes: *

> "I do not think that in order to vary the home influence, the nursery school needs to be institutional in its atmosphere or even impersonal. It is my belief that an informal homeliness is important in the environment that the baby meets when he takes his first step out of the family. There should be intimacy and warmth and an avoidance of the traditional "teacher" attitude. As far as possible, there should be opportunity for the children to establish real relationships with adult members of the group, as well as with each other, and that is not possible if adults are not making a genuine response to the children and the nursery situation. A part of a child's experience comes to him through contact with varying personalities."

On the other hand, if the nursery school can afford to be more like the home, the home can well afford to be more like the nursery school. Watch a mother with her child in public, traveling, in a dining room or wherever the behavior of the child calls for attention. It is rarely that one does not feel that she is paying too much attention to the child, making demands on him too great for his experience, bothering him by too many cautions and instructions. The intentional indifference of the nursery school, as well as the consistency of its methods, might well be commended to parents.

Adult Restraint.

So much for the positive direction which the parent supplies: What of restraint? Here again graded forms may be observed from the mild restraint of a look, a touch or a word to the extreme forms of punishment. The question of punishment, we will discuss in a later chapter, but other forms may be reviewed here.

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* *Children in the Nursery School*, p. 95.

Disparagement.

It is important at the outset to recognize that the amount of restraint which it is necessary to use with children is often the direct result of the methods which we use with them. If by our manner, tone of voice or general expression, we convey to them that we are doubtful of their conformity or good behavior, we are thereby suggesting the kind of behavior which we wish to avoid. It is important not to disparage the child, nor to suggest that he will be naughty or unreasonable. The old adage of giving a dog a bad name is nowhere more clearly brought out than with children. This is illustrated in a variety of ways. A child in school gets a reputation of being a dullard or a mischievous child and he may be quite unable throughout his school course to live this down but instead may resort to playing upon it. Children, as Cameron points out,* have not the standards of self-criticism which adults presumably have and for that reason they accept our judgments of them often without question. The school child may pass to a new room and leave his bad name behind him; the child in the home, on the other hand, once he has established a reputation for bad temper, whining, untruthfulness, untidiness or whatever the fault may be, is so securely anchored to that fault that it is almost impossible to be rid of it. Parents with the best will in the world may find it almost impossible to rid themselves of the mental set which they have acquired towards a child. This all goes to prove how essential it is not to apply disparaging labels to the child's behavior. An amusing instance is that of a mother who had so often called her baby of a year a "bad girl" in her zeal for making her a good girl, that whenever she lifted the child from her cot, she responded with "bad girl," evidently having adopted the opprobrious title as her own.

Comments passed on the child's behavior, "He is always slow," "He is so untidy," and especially disparagement in comparison with other children should always be avoided. It is bad for the child to hear them, it is equally bad for us to say them. It is almost unthinkable, when we stop to consider the matter, that a coöperative attitude such as we wish to engender could be encouraged in the child by such comments. We thus hinder our purpose of controlling the child and at the same time we cultivate in our own minds a fixed idea of the child's faults.

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* *The Nervous Child,* p. 155.

Scolding and nagging are exaggerated forms of the disparagement motive. They indicate an ineffective system of discipline. The mother does not really believe that she will secure a good response by such methods, she follows them to relieve her own emotional strains. Actually they are likely to prove cumulative in effect—the more she scolds the more angry she becomes and the greater is the child's resistance. Nagging, in the parent, like dawdling in the child, is largely a bad habit, which could be overcome if its futility were once clearly grasped and a more constructive scheme of discipline laid down. It is almost sure to engender negative attitudes in the child, sulkiness or rebellion or the general attitude of resistance which is described as negativism. As Cameron points out,* negativism is symptomatic of an inconsistent and ineffective discipline.

Negative Suggestion.

The tendency to express restraint in negative forms is common. For some reason, it is easier to say "Don't" than "Do." Probably the reason is that "don't" is actually what we mean; we have to reorientate our thinking in terms of what we wish the child to *do,* before we can direct him effectively. Yet there is a sound principle underlying this, namely, the force of a positive suggestion as a stimulus to action, of a negative suggestion as a challenge to dispute.

In some cases, when the child threatens to stall at a certain point the difficulty can be overcome by offering him an alternative. "Will you come downstairs with me or would you rather stay and play in your own room?" if he is bent on running water in the bathroom, for example. It must, however, be a valid alternative for the child and not a threat. "Will you come downstairs with me or have a spanking?" would have an entirely different significance.

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* *The Nervous Child,* p. 60.

Removal.

If the child shows active resistance even in the face of the most enlightened methods the form of restraint which seems effective with a minimum of undesirable results is to take the child bodily and put him off by himself till his behavior is more amenable. This practice, followed consistently in the nursery school, seldom fails. It is there reenforced by the penalty of absence from the group, which may be a less compelling motive at home. Parents who resort to this plan of isolation sometimes complain that it is no punishment to a child to be left alone, that if put in his own room, he merely finds something to amuse himself with and appears to be quite happy. Why not? The aim of such banishment is not to penalize but to correct the child. It must be judged by the kind of adjustment which at the time and in the long run it effects in the child's behavior. If he comes out after a period of retirement willing to do what he had refused before, good-tempered and serene in attitude, what more could be desired? The less emotional upset attendant on such removal the better. Adults are beginning to realize that they should not storm and rage, but should be as quiet and undisturbed as possible, even in a situation which calls for the removal of the child from the family circle. The more we can act with something of the same imperturbability that characterizes the physical world, the surer will we be of the results. Why expect that the child must make a storm in order for the experience to have disciplinary effect? To get control of himself may be what he needs and an emotional upset would in no sense help in this adjustment. A period of solitary play may be all that is needed to quiet him. For this reason a mother may remove a child from a group who are playing together, not as a penalty but merely because he appears to be overstimulated and excited by group play.

Redirection.

The most constructive form of restraint is often, when one sees a difficulty on the horizon, to anticipate by a new direction to the child's activities. Thus, instead of leaving the child facing a blank wall of a negative command, he is given a new possibility of adjustment. For example, a small child is distressed because her older sisters cannot take her swimming with them. She might be left to cry it out at home in her own back yard. Instead, the mother suggests that she drop the child at a community playground in one of the city parks on her way downtown. The child spends a happy and profitable morning. The park has not been offered as a bribe to stop her tears; rather the mother has recognized the child's right to an outlet for her energies. If one avenue is closed, the parent should be alert in helping her to find another. Adults, if they reflect on their own experience will recognize that they control themselves more effectively through substituting valid alternatives when a desired course of action is blocked than they do through any mere negative fiat.

Actions Not Words.

Lastly, one must note the tendency, both in stimulating and restraining children, to rely largely on verbal control. If we could cut our conversation in two we should probably be more effective parents. There is in *The Education of Henry Adams,* an incident, which illustrates this so nicely that we quote it at length.* It concerned Adams and his grandfather, a former President of the United States:

> "All the more singular it seemed afterwards to him that his first serious contact with the President should have been a strug-

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* *The Education of Henry Adams, An Autobiography,* Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1918, pp. 12-13.

gle of will, in which the old man almost necessarily defeated the boy, but instead of leaving, as usual in such defeats, a lifelong sting, left rather an impression of as fair treatment as could be expected from a natural enemy. The boy seldom met with such restraint. He could not have been much more than six years old at the time—seven at the utmost—and his mother had taken him to Quincy for a long stay with the President during the summer. What became of the rest of the family he quite forgot; but he distinctly remembered standing at the house door one summer morning in a passionate outburst of rebellion against going to school. Naturally, his mother was the immediate victim of his rage; that is what mothers are for, and boys also; but in this case the boy had his mother at unfair advantage, for she was a guest, and had no means of enforcing obedience. Henry showed a certain tactical ability by refusing to start, and he met all efforts at compulsion by successful, though too vehement, protest. He was in a fair way to win and was holding his own, with sufficient energy, at the bottom of the long staircase which led up to the President's library, when the door opened, and the old man slowly came down. Putting on his hat, he took the boy's hand without a word, and walked with him, paralyzed by awe, up the road to the town. After the first moments of consternation at this interference in a domestic dispute, the boy reflected that an old gentleman close on eighty would never trouble himself to walk near a mile on a hot summer morning over a shadeless road to take a boy to school, and that it would be strange if a lad imbued with the passion of freedom could not find a corner to dodge around, somewhere before reaching the school door. Then and always, the boy insisted that this reasoning justified his apparent submission; but the old man did not stop and the boy saw all his strategical points turned, one after another, until he found himself seated inside the school, and obviously the center of curious if not malevolent criticism. Not till then did the President release his hand and depart.

"The point was that this act, contrary to inalienable rights of boys, and nullifying the social compact, ought to have made him dislike his grandfather for life. He could not recall that it had this effect even for a moment. With a certain maturity of mind, the child must have recognized that the President, though a tool of tyranny, had done his disreputable work with a certain intelligence. He had shown no temper, no irritation, no personal feeling, and had made no display of force. Above all, he had held his tongue. During the long walk he had said nothing; he had uttered no syllable of revolting cant about the duty of obedience and the wickedness of resistance to law; he had shown no concern in the matter; hardly even a consciousness of the boy's existence."

Some Principles of Constructive Discipline.

In conclusion, we may enumerate certain of the principles which have been touched on in this discussion in respect of a plan of constructive discipline:

Consistency: Establish a routine for the young child; within that routine make as few absolute demands as is compatible with carrying it through successfully, but above all things be consistent in the handling of the child. One has only to observe how the child's routine is put out by variations in his accustomed treatment in order to realize that we save trouble for ourselves as well as for him when we make a reasonable plan and then adhere to it. Then every one knows where he is in the scheme of things. Dr. Mathilda Tufts, speaking at the Chicago Conference on Child Study,* several years ago, told the story of a child who protested against being sent to bed, but when he heard the clock strike, he closed his books and rose, saying, "The *Clock* says half-past seven, time to go to bed!" That is, he found it easier to take orders from the clock than from his family, the reason, presumably, being that the clock kept better time! The more we can introduce these impersonal features into a routine necessary for the child, the easier he will find conformity to its demands. Along with the personal element we largely eliminate caprice and chance from the régime. We may still be personal in tempering the situation to the child where there is obvious need of adjustment, but in general, the less we meddle with a recognized and expected order, the easier for the child to know and conform to what is expected of him.

Minimum of Intervention. Adults should resist the temptation to direct and manage their child's activities. Even if the child is making a muddle of things, he has a right to make mistakes if he is to learn. The adult should not interfere unless he is (1) in danger of hurting himself, (2) engaged in aimless or destructive activity, (3) interfering with others. Freedom for the child involves not merely materials to use, but the chance to use them, even if his ideas of use are less developed than our own. If a child tends to depend too greatly on adult stimulation, the adult should seek ways of weaning the child, gradually withdrawing from the situation or, if need be, throwing the child on his own resources.

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* *Intelligent Parenthood,* University of Chicago Press, 1926, p. 26.

In this connection one might also point out the difficulties induced in a situation when several adults are trying to direct or to restrain a child, especially if they use methods of control which do not harmonize. It is desirable that the management of the child be delegated to some one person, in the absence of the parents, and that at all times other members of the family, who are not responsible, refrain from interference. Similarly, if one parent has begun to handle a situation, it is injudicious for the other to step in. Disagreements in parental practice should be discussed in private. The pressure of the social environment on the child will be greatly lessened if the rule of one person at a time to deal with any situation is maintained.

It goes without saying, that consistency in the methods of control used by different members of the family is greatly to be desired, and that it is the parents' responsibility to see that the methods used are those of which they approve.

Simple Instructions. It is hard for adults to realize the difficulty that children may have in carrying out what seem to the adults, simple instructions. It is only at the five-year level that a child is expected in the Binet test to carry out three commissions consecutively, yet how often parents overwhelm children with a confusion of orders, warnings and even threats, in trying to impress on them some commission to be executed. We should stop and think out carefully what we wish the child to do and then take pains to tell him in clear simple terms, after we have made sure that we have his undivided attention. To make him repeat our instructions is an effective way of fixing the associations.

Action Rather Than Words. Again, the moral pointed so effectively by the Adams incident, that actions speak louder than words. This is doubly true when the words take the form of threats which the parent does not intend to carry out. Children seldom fail to see through such a situation. Thus a child of five was taken to a neighbor's house. She spoke rather pertly to the neighbor, and the mother said: "Your father told me that when you spoke like that, I was to spank you." The neighbor rejoined, "Take her to the kitchen here and spank her." The child looked at them and remarked: "You two make me sick at my stomach." Who had the best of this controversy?

Voice and Manner. Not only should our instructions be simple, but we should learn to speak slowly and quietly in distinct but gently modulated tones. This is largely a matter of training, of accustoming ourselves to watch for rising inflections, harsh tones, loud speaking or a querulous, fault-finding manner of speaking. Conscious control, artificial as it may seem, will greatly improve the child's response; and with perseverance conscious reëducation on the part of the adult will result in a genuine transformation of voice and manner.

Not to be flurried or ruffled, to keep calm in the face of the child's excitement or anger, so that he gets no "rise" out of us is a gain of signal importance in control. The child will be calmed by our composure. In difficult situations when it is necessary to restrain a recalcitrant child the episode can be carried through without a residue of resentment *provided the adult shows no emotional reaction to the child's behavior.*

A Judicial Attitude.

By this we mean nothing severe and formidable, but the *habit of suspending judgment* till all the facts are known. A child comes to ask permission to do a given thing and we refuse and he then brings forward a perfectly good reason for his being allowed to do as he asks. An argument develops—which puts the parent in a wrong position. If the child's contention is good, the parent must either revise his decision or stubbornly maintain it in the face of the evidence. In either case, parental prestige is lowered.

Treating Children Individually.

This may sound absurd, but there is a tendency in families of more than one child to deal with children *en masse*. Much of the effectiveness of our contacts with children will depend on there being individual contacts. This holds true, of course, of all matters where it is necessary to discuss the child's behavior with him in a critical fashion. But it is equally worth while to spend time with each child alone. Children are different when alone with the mother or father from what they are in the family group. There is a place for group activities in which all participate but there is also a place for the intimate sharing of experience between adult and child. Such occasions may be quite incidental, but they often afford opportunities for an exchange of views and a sharing of experience which is of the utmost importance in building up a spontaneous confidence and trust between parent and child.

OUTLINE VIII

ADULT INFLUENCES—WITTING

I. Types of Discipline:
  - Harsh—fanatical obsessions,
    - —punishment.
  - Lenient—indulgent,
    - —indifferent,
    - —evasive. [illegible]
  - Reasonable.

II. Forms of Adult Control:
  - Stimulation—commands,
    - —requests,
    - —suggestion,
    - —help. [illegible]
  - Restraint—disparagement,
    - —negative suggestion,
    - —removal,
    - —redirection.

III. Some Principles of Constructive Discipline:
  - Consistency.
  - Non-interference.
  - A judicial attitude.
  - Treating children individually.

IV. Some Techniques of Control:
  - Positive direction.
  - Simple instructions.
  - Action rather than words.
  - Control of voice and manner.

V. References:
  - Cameron, H.—*The Nervous Child,* Chapter III.
  - Groves, Ernest—*Personality and Social Adjustment,* Chapter XII.

VI. Questions:
  1. What are the objections to saying "don't" to a child?
  2. When is suggestion preferable to comment?

ILLUSTRATIONS VIII

I. *Evasive Discipine.*

Coaxing:

"I have hard children to manage. I tell my little girl, for instance, to go and wash her hands. If I attempted to take her there would be a storm, so I try to *inveigle* her into going. If she does it at all, it must be by herself."

"Picking up toys is a matter for coaxing, 'getting things tidy before daddy comes home.' "

Shaming and Nagging:

"Scoldings in our home always took the form of raking up ancient history. I was always bored by them and I resolved never to scold my own children."

"My boy of nine is afraid to go downstairs in the dark. We used to make fun of him for being so timid. He tried to hide his fear and would not admit it for a long time, although it was worse than ever. I suddenly realized that by laughing at him, we had magnified the difficulty instead of shaming him out of it as I had expected."

Making a Game of the Routine:

"When you say, 'It's time to go to bed,' and he says, 'I won't,' is it advisable to say, 'Well, let's play hide and seek as we go upstairs.' That is, divert the child's attention from the point at issue? My youngster seems to get along badly with most of the maids I've had and I'm wondering if it is he who is at fault."

"I tried to get her to play being an Indian papoose but she said she did not want to play."

"My little girl hates to have her face washed, so we sing a song about washing faces, 'a thousand times a year.'"

Variety of Methods:

Mother: "Sometimes I change completely. For instance, I say, 'It's time to go upstairs to the toilet.' He says, 'I won't.' I just walk up without saying anything. Ninety-nine cases out of one hundred, he walks up after me."

Leader: "What would you do if he did not follow?"

Mother: "I would invent a situation that would interest him. That would be a last resort."

Leader: "But what if he was not interested?"

Mother: "Then I would simply take him by the hand and take him upstairs."

Question: What was gained or lost by postponing this last procedure?

Deceit:

"When my little girl had scarlet fever and they had to take her to the isolation hospital, I promised her that she was going to a birthday party. There was no party and the nurse said she howled all day. I wouldn't do that again as I found it didn't do any good."

II. *Types of Restraint:*

Disparagement:

"A boy of two, who had the reputation of being incorrigible, came to my play school. I told him the first morning that he was a good boy, and I have never had any trouble when I had him to myself. But one day his mother visited the school and kept saying 'Don't' to him all the time she was there. He was persistently naughty throughout her visit."

"How much should one use comparison in stimulating a child? For instance, 'John can tie up his shoes.' Is that apt to give a child a feeling of inferiority?"

"I wish I could have had an opportunity to belong to a study group when my children were younger. It has taken us three years to undo one mistake that we made. When our first child was doing anything we didn't want her to do, we would pounce on her and say 'Naughty Baby' and make a great fuss over what she had done. She was of a sensitive nature and this tended to make her deceitful. When she was about four years old, we realized what we were doing and since then we have taken as little notice of her misdemeanors as possible. The trouble has been overcome to a large extent by this more gentle treatment, although she is not yet as frank and open in many ways as we would desire. But she does not deceive or hide things as she used to do."

Removal:

"After John had his tonsils out the doctor said that he must only play for half an hour after school. One night he stayed at school till six o'clock. When he finally came home, I put him into bed, gave him his supper and then put out the light. One week later he did the same thing. I used the same treatment and the difficulty never recurred again."

Question: Does this differ from putting the child to bed as a punishment?

"I put my child in his room for any act of disobedience, for example, running away. He was always brought back and put in his room. It was immediate and consistent."

"Mary is not fond of her vegetables. For a while, I just took them away and gave her her dessert. After about a week of this I realized that she was just fiddling with her first course and then asking for her pudding. It got worse and worse. Now I have changed my tactics. I say nothing, but just remove her first course, take her down from her chair and put her to bed for her afternoon nap. Two or three times lately when I made a motion to get up, she said, 'Wait a minute, I haven't finished.' Then she ate up her dinner."

III. *Adult Attitudes:*

Facilitating:

Mother: "Well, when we are in the wrong, do you think it's unwise for us to admit we have been in the wrong to the children? I have an eight-year-old who argues with me and takes me to task and when I think she's right I say, 'Ruth, I really think I was wrong there.' "

Leader: "I cannot understand why that should ever be questioned. Why should not the same laws of honesty govern our relations with our children as govern our other relations?"

"I have learned a lot about general principles and I have learned to ignore a lot of things that I just couldn't ignore before. I was always so anxious about everything my child did and showed my anxiety."

"I don't think it is wise to retaliate. I think it is more important to set a good example. Show him that you do things for him and tell him that we all must do things for each other if we are going to get along nicely."

"We have made a point of going carefully over our situation, reviewing to see why we were having so many conflicts with our girl. She is a very headstrong child and I was headstrong so that we were having issues over everything. The slightest request would call forth 'I won't do it,' 'I don't have to,' and all sorts of resistances. Well, I just felt something had to be done and I have given it more time, spending hours and hours, figuring out how I was to approach her. I find that during the last year the situation is very much better because I am controlling my attitude and asking her coöperation more than I did."

Antagonistic:

"At times if I ask him to do something for me, he would refuse; if I insist, he will not. He gets red in the face. He likes to play with the mah jong set and delights in taking out tiles and throwing them around the living room. I ask him to pick them up and he just will not. He is four years old. He says he does not want to. At times he irritates me so, I have to punish him."

"Last summer my little girl of six was with me at the station, seeing some people off. She acted terribly—she was just ugly. I was annoyed with her. A few months later she said, 'Do you remember the day at the station that I was naughty?'

Then she said, 'You weren't paying any attention to me.' I said, 'Well, why should I? I see you all the time but I hadn't seen those people for a long time. I'll be very disappointed if you do that again. There'll be trouble if you do.' "

"I had something like that happen to me recently. I explained that she had not done what I had asked her to do and I'd not do this for her. She let out a terrible squeal. I usually start to sing when she does this but inside I feel I could shake her so hard, but I don't do it."

Spending Time with One Child:

"I have had occasion during the past winter to walk to church with my oldest daughter, a girl of eleven, while the rest of the family went in the car. We have had long talks together ranging all the way from planning a spring wardrobe to what she was going to do when she grew up. I realized then that you get the confidence and understanding of a child when you have her alone in a way that is not possible when all the children of a family are together."

"I felt that I had to have time with each of my children alone. The girl is older than the boy and when he came, I found myself so occupied that the little girl felt out of it and it was a little treat to her to have me go in and talk to her before she went to sleep."

CASE VIII

JACK.	Age 5/2.	* I.Q. 118.
GEORGE.	Age 9/3.	* I.Q. 82.

(N.B. In cases where, as with these brothers, the etiological factors involve relationships that concern both subjects as well as their parents, it is interesting to consider the histories of the children in juxtaposition. For this reason the data upon Jack and George are presented side by side.)

Problem as stated by mother:

The mother complained about her eldest child, a boy of nine, who had been stealing, staying out late at night, sulking and being generally "very difficult." Asked about her younger child, a boy of five, she replied that he was "an angel, no trouble at all."

History:

Family Life:
* Father: Age 42—book-keeper—neurotic—occupational instability.
Mother: Age 35—public school education—not bright.
Siblings: Two sons aged five and nine.
Others: None.
Home: Flat—six rooms—two children sleep in same room—no garden—house poorly furnished.

	Jack	*George*
* Obstetrical History:	normal	induced—difficult labor—high forceps
* Developmental History:	normal—breast fed to eight months	difficult feeding—weaned at 2 months—loss of weight for 1 month measles at 2 years—whooping cough at 4 years
Attitudes:	nothing unusual	will not eat vegetables

	Jack	*George*
* Motor Development:	walked at 11 months	walked at 17 months
Speech:	18 months	3 years
Eating:	finicky	rather gluttonous—no difficulty at present
* Elimination:	no problem	persistent enuresis—almost every night
* Sleep:	quarrels with brother	quarrels with brother—difficult to waken in morning
* Play:	cries easily	good-natured away from home—likes to play with smaller children
* Sex:	nothing unusual	no education—an unpleasant episode with a younger girl six months before
Emotions:	cries easily	occasional violent temper directed against brother
Self-tendencies:	tattles and whines	sulks — attempts to bully
Discipline:	routine discipline fair—escapes serious punishment by tattling and currying favor	routine discipline fair—the father has beaten this boy quite frequently, especially for the misdemeanors reported by the mother
		mother stated she had had a "bad time raising this boy" and when the next baby came she felt she could not handle both and this boy was placed in a foster home till two years ago

Diagnosis:

A glance at the two histories shows that the mother did have a difficult time with the older boy who, being backward, did not respond well to the rather desultory and often severe discipline of the household. The second child presented none of these difficulties and when the older boy was returned from the foster home there was apparent criticism of his conduct and unfair comparison with the younger brother who was frequently quoted as an example. The father began to beat the boy who irritated him by his clumsiness and "laziness." *Favoritism* was a main etiological factor and *disparagement* of one child by comparison with the other further complicated the situation.

Treatment:

The very serious question arose here, as to whether the older boy should not be removed from the home again. The attitude of the father was unfortunate and it was difficult to get him to see that it was unfair. The mother was dominated by her husband and apparently was tied up emotionally in the younger boy. On the other hand this boy deserved a chance in his own home and with fair treatment would probably respond. The father was interviewed several times and finally consented to try out the scheme which was outlined. It was thought that if the father could be shown that the boy was in earnest and the boy shown that the father was really interested in him, the victory would be won.

Obviously the first point of attack was the enuresis. This annoyed the parents, inconvenienced the brother and reacted unfavorably on the boy himself. The usual treatment * was outlined and the father asked to supervise the records and waking times. Fortunately the results were almost immediately satisfactory and in three months the boy was getting up by himself and the bed wetting had stopped.

In the meantime both boys were put on a regular allowance, specific tasks were also assigned to each, the father helped the older boy with his schoolwork and began to boast about the boy to his mother. Corporal punishment, of course, was stopped.

There have been no stealing episodes nor lateness since the

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beginning of this régime and the atmosphere of the home has been remarkably changed for the better.

By the time the younger boy's development threatens to overtake that of the older boy the elder brother will be moved to a vocational school and be educated along industrial lines to avoid the unfavorable comparison which might otherwise be made.

Comment:

Frequently, of course, several or all members of a family circle have some significant bearing upon the special problems of one of their number but it is not often that such a favorable opportunity arises for using the whole family as an educational device for each other.

approach &
withdrawal

CHAPTER IX

RELATIONS AMONG CHILDREN

In their relations with adults children are in an inferior or subordinate position. The "normal dependence," as Burham describes it, is an essential aspect of the child-parent relationship, and if it is infringed, if the child succeeds in gaining the upper hand through poor discipline or inferior mentality of the adult, the situation is always inimical to the welfare of the child. In relations among children, however, there is no principle of dominance inherent in the situation, at least when the children are of approximately the same age level. Then each child must find his own standing with respect to others. Various factors enter to determine what that relation shall be, age, intelligence, social development, etc. The same child may be at one time dominant, at another submissive in the give and take relations within a group. It is this trying and experimenting with social relationships which gives the intercourse of children with one another its educative value.

Fundamental Social Tendencies.

We have had occasion from time to time to refer to the social tendencies, and have followed McDougall,* in his distinction of positive and negative self-tendencies or self-assertion and self-negation. In the young child these tendencies develop from the original motor attitudes of approach and withdrawal as these ramify in experience along with emotion and the appetites through a variety of social settings. The infant who learns to smile when his mother comes into the room is reacting positively to a complex of experiences of which the association of his mother's face with the satisfaction of his hunger is probably the core.

* McDougall, William, *Social Psychology*, pp. 53-56, 1928 edition.

Similarly, he may react negatively to a stranger, the emotion of fear combining with the avoiding reaction. As his experience increases the child comes to distinguish the more abiding parts of his experience from those parts that are continually subject to change. His bodily sensations, with the rhythms of hunger, sleep, elimination, build themselves up into a continuum of experience which becomes the self,—in distinction from the non-self, which is less central and more changeful for him. Not that his non-self is unimportant for him because presently it becomes organized into his perceived world of objects and living things. But to the various people and things which make up the non-self he reacts in different ways. Certain objects and persons he comes to relate so closely with his abiding experience, the self, or we may now say him-self, that they take on something of the warmth, color and acceptability of his own personality. Others he repudiates as alien to him-self. Self-tendencies of acceptance and rejection are now being added to mere motor attitudes of approach and withdrawal. His toys, his clothes, his family—the child identifies with himself in a unique fashion. Interference with them touches his integrity and his own activity is called into play, asserting or submitting himself as the occasion may require. As adults we likewise share in this experience of identifying ourselves with certain things which have taken on value for us. Witness our embarrassment when we mislay a favorite pencil or the pain of casting aside our most outworn shoes. The story of the factory operative who was found weeping at her machine because her old one had broken down and a new one had been substituted, is evidence of the absurd lengths to which identification with objects may carry us. We buttress our personalities by the accretion of things.

But social identification is a more complex matter. For there one deals not with objects to be annexed but with persons activated by the same motives as ourselves. A social encounter takes on, therefore, the nature of a contest in which one party or the other comes to be in the ascendant whereas the other assumes a position of submission or dependence. The free intercourse of children offers often an amusing demonstration of this process of adjustment. Watch two strange children trying one another out, recounting their possessions, their accomplishments, their standing in school, the size of their families, the number of rooms in their homes, in order to see which is to be top dog in respect of annexations—though they also may descend to the motor level of physical combat to settle the question. Watch yourself, also, on your next experience of establishing social relations with a stranger, and see what adventitious aids you summon to support your position. The process is more subtle with adults but not different in any essential.

Now it is important for a well-adjusted personality to have experience of both types of relationship. We sometimes speak of people as having or being a dominant personality, and this term always conveys a certain element of disparagement. This means that we do not like the type of person who insists on always being on top, on always holding the center of the circle. On the other hand we find the timid, retiring person whose only contribution to social interaction is to echo our ideas a bit dull. Neither consistent nor invariable submission, but the pliability which makes us submit willingly to genuine superiority while at the same time we assume leadership when the situation is one to which we can contribute, is what is really required in social life. To see how these traits may be developed in the experience of young children and to estimate the value of such a development for the child is the purpose of this chapter.

Finding Our Social Level.

The infant is accustomed to having his needs anticipated, he is apt therefore to develop a strong sense of mastery and to protest vigorously if he does not receive at once what he desires. As he grows older and learns to walk and talk, he is likely to meet rebuffs in the prompt realization of his desires. Thus the period of from two to three years is apt to be a stormy one in the experience of many children because the dominating tendencies of infancy meet with checks from the other members of the family circle. This is a necessary part of the socialization of the child, for if his impulse to mastery gains the upper hand at this period it is unlikely that it will be effectively curbed and brought into balance later. By the end of the pre-school period the child has probably established himself with a fair measure of harmony in the family circle, he has found his place in relation to the other members of this group. When he enters school an entirely new series of adjustments has to be undertaken, in which he will find himself, not in relation to the often indulgent members of his own family, but among those of approximately the same age and status, other children who have no special interest in him, and who will rate him as a person solely on the basis of the respect that he is able to secure for himself. This period presents a critical phase of adjustment for almost any child. Even the child who has been thoroughly acclimatized to social life in the nursery school is apt to modify his behavior when thrown into the larger environment of the public school. "You would be surprised how quiet I am," was the comment of one child who had exchanged her position of oldest child in the nursery school for a quite undistinguished place in the ranks of a public kindergarten. The willingness to change from a dominant to a submissive personality shown in this instance should be a good prognosis for successful adjustment later.

In discussing social relations among children we shall draw not merely from parents' experience in the home but more largely upon observations in the nursery school situation, for the reason that the family during the pre-school period affords fewer instances of the relations among children of relatively the same age and standing. The advantages of making fundamental social adjustments in this period rather than postponing them, as is commonly done, to the school period are many. For one thing, when the child goes to school, the demands of the curriculum soon begin to be felt; social adjustments become then a by-product of the school situation. In the nursery school the play of the children offers a uniquely favorable opportunity for learning the rudiments of social behavior. There is much greater opportunity for experience with other children than the home can ordinarily afford, and the supervision of teachers, unobtrusive but always present, safeguards this experimenting of the children in a way that is otherwise rare.

Social Compliance.

The young child entering the nursery school is apt to be overawed at first by the novelty of his surroundings. Very often his behavior at first shows few social adaptations towards other children. This is not the case, however, towards adults; he may exert himself in a variety of ways to gain the attention and approval of those in charge in the school. This is to be expected as his former experience has been largely in terms of intercourse with his mother and father or with older brothers and sisters. Other children like himself are an unknown quantity and as a rule he approaches them with extreme caution. He probably spends the first few weeks in the school playing with toys, and watching the social play of the other children from a safe distance. This watching is, however, a highly significant stage in adaptive social behavior. It is not passive; rather the child is quietly absorbing the spirit of the group, for after watching what the others are doing in concert he is apt to do the same thing, still, however, acting alone. The reflection of social play thus falls on his behavior.

While watching may thus be described as incipient social behavior in that the child's attention is directed to what is happening in the group even though he is not an active participant, there are other forms of behavior in which the child seems definitely to avoid the group. This may be due to timidity, or it may be something more persistent, a definite preference apparently for solitary play. This is characteristic of most children of about two years, but it may not be limited to the young child who is making his initial adjustment to a new situation; indeed it may in some cases persist over practically the whole nursery school period. The child of this type plays alone, often talking to himself freely although he has little communication with others. What are the causes of such solitary tendencies in some children? They may on occasion be merely a means of wholesome escape from too much social pressure but with other children they are sufficiently regular and frequent to be regarded as characteristic. Whether the withdrawn child represents a definite personality type, prophetic of later and perhaps more serious maladjustments, or whether the environment has failed to supply the particular kind of social stimulation which this child needs, is still an open question. In some cases it would seem that the child has been so conditioned to adult society that he definitely prefers it, and will be alone rather than bothering to adapt to other children. In other cases it is less easy to explain this trend on the ground of early conditioning.

By degrees the tendency to imitate the play of other children becomes more and more marked. Imitation may be to some extent a function of age growth; it is also decidedly a function of social experience. Expose a child to the activities of a group, and he soon begins deliberately to copy what he sees there. By degrees the distance between the child and the group is lessened till he takes his place in the social picture. As a rule, however, even in doing so, the young child maintains a submissive attitude to the other children. He becomes a partner in their games, but submits to a minor rôle as assigned. He may simply do in concert what the others are doing; or he may assume some part in coöperative play. Coöperation, however, usually implies direction on the part of one child and a willingness to follow orders on the part of the others, and the child new to the situation usually falls in line as one of the followers. He plays the part assigned to him by a more experienced child. In so doing he is receiving an education of the greatest importance; he is learning to take orders, to subordinate his activities to the wishes of the group. In other words, he is learning social compliance.

Social compliance, expressed in imitative and coöperative play, is valuable; if, however, it takes the form of dependence on the more assertive children it may be a doubtful boon. The child who submits when he is knocked about by other children is not making an effective adaptation. With growth in age and experience a submissive child will often develop marked traits of resistance to the aggression of other children and this will be recognized by those in charge of the situation as an indication of maturing social power. The ability to resist social pressure is being demonstrated as a desirable trait of personality even if its immediate results may be somewhat disturbing and its accomplishment decidedly clumsy.

The child who is always appealing to an older or stronger child for help, shows likewise a vein of dependence which is not to be encouraged. This happens comparatively rarely. Children are more apt to appeal to adults for help, acting on the analogy of the home situation. Even here the tendency to seek help except in certain necessary matters of their routine soon disappears. Self-reliance in relation to things is readily assumed as a result of the nature of the training.

Dominance Traits.

The behavior of the child soon begins to show certain traces of the dominance motive, and this increases during his pre-school years. The tendency to assert himself is not, however, purely a function of age, as some children go through the entire period of pre-school training without showing any marked changes in this respect. Whether dominance or the reverse is to be attributed in such children to the early home environment, to intelligence, or to hereditary influences, we are not yet in a position to say. Indeed in this whole discussion of social relations among young children we can put forward only suggestions of a tentative sort as the field still awaits detailed exploration.

Whatever its origins, dominance expresses itself in a variety of forms. In the young child it may take the form of *resistance* and non-compliance with others. Instead of fitting into the nursery school picture in some such fashion as we have described he may refuse strenuously to have anything to do with his surroundings or his companions. This becomes an active avoidance, rather than the passive withdrawal which characterized the early behavior of the submissive child. Such resistance may manifest itself in relation to the overtures of the children, though it is more often directed with special strength towards the adults who are responsible for the maintenance of the routine.

Interference is another type of resistant behavior in the child. Such interference with young children may take the form of what has been described as treating children as objects.* That is, a new child not infrequently will go round knocking down any children who come in his way as though they were so many blocks. This has no element of malice in it; he is either trying to see what will happen, or else he is removing an encumbrance from his path. Such behavior is a sign of social inexperience; the child simply does not understand the forces which he is dealing with, though their powers of retaliation are likely to inform him without delay.

Intentional interference is of quite a different sort, and we would regard it as a true expression of the dominance motive. The child snatches toys from another child, knocks down the structure that has been built with care by one of his companions, pushes a child aside on the swing or slide, or in a variety of ways tries to push himself in where the other child already is. It seems probable that such behavior is not planned to injure the other child, that it is rather the out-cropping of the impulse of the interfering child to hold the stage for himself. Watch him elbow the other children aside so that he may see the picture in the story hour, hear his strident voice above the others clamoring to be allowed to show his "news." He is trying at every turn to get attention for himself and his, even though that has to be done at the expense of the others in his group.

Stimulation: But interference is, fortunately, not the only form of dominant behavior; it manifests itself in socially acceptable ways also. The dominant child usually plays an important part in the school in stimulating the activities of the other children. He is resourceful in devising new games; he builds well, is always thinking of new meaning for the materials which he manipulates. He is apt to talk a great deal, and his conversation, while it may be for him primarily a way of working out his own ideas, a mental manipulation to correspond with the physical manipulations with which his hands are engaged, has an important indirect effect on the group of which he forms a part. The other children imitate his sayings as well as his acts. Witness the way in which a group of children, sitting modeling plasticine will repeat after one another the remarks which one such child may throw out in regard to his work.

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* Baldwin and Stecher, *Psychology of the Preschool Child,* D. Appleton and Co., 1925, p. 243.

Organization and Direction: The dominant child organizes and directs the play of the other children, who are thus enabled to participate in play of a higher degree of social complexity than they would be capable of alone. Group play unfettered by adult control usually devolves on the leadership of one child. As a rule it is free from any elements of compulsion, the children enter or leave the group with the greatest freedom, the leader and one or two lieutenants forming a permanent core for the undertaking, the subordinates drifting in and out as they feel inclined. This frees the younger children from the pressure which continued participation in group activities might imply. As a rule the leader accepts this loose organization of his followers as a matter of course, though with certain precocious children, or with children who are nearing the upper limit of the pre-school period, there is often a tendency to put pressure on the children to stay in the game and abide by the parts assigned. If you are the ticket seller of the boat, the captain is not pleased to see you run away and dig in the sand pile. The insistence on a closer type of social organization is, however, an indication that the child is ready for a more organized form of social intercourse. He is demanding a steady and dependable type of social conformity such as is seen in children's games. He is thus passing beyond the purlieus of the pre-school period. Children in the nursery school do achieve in certain cases a fairly prolonged type of social play, as when two or three children play "doll" together, but the fully developed corporate activity involved in games is characteristic of a later period. Even with the upper age limits much of the play is of an exceedingly fragmentary and casual character. It is important to recognize this and not to demand of children a degree of social precocity of which they are not yet capable.

"Mothering": A child's tendency to express dominance by "mothering" a younger child is the correlate of the tendency on the part of the submissive child to seek care and protection from an older companion. Friendships sometimes develop which express this reciprocity of care and dependence. They are seldom satisfactory, as they work inevitably to check the development of the dependent member, whilst the older child gets emotional satisfaction in the situation rather than the stimulus which comes from constructive activity. As a rule, however, younger children show a perfectly healthy resistance to any such mothering advances. The little child usually struggles violently against the unwanted embraces of the older one whose unwelcome attentions he has unwittingly drawn on himself.

Friendships in the sense of the persistent associations of two children in the nursery school to the relative exclusion of others are unusual, and seldom occur unless the children have been thrown together outside the school. A casual making and breaking of contacts such as we have indicated in their attempts at organized play is much more characteristic of the intercourse of children at this period. It is, of course, much later than the pre-school age that the gang spirit comes to the fore.

Values of Children's Relations.

What are the values of the sort of social relationships among children that we have been describing? This question can be answered exhaustively only as we trace the social history of children after they leave the nursery school and pursue their way through school and college into occupations and married life. If social adjustments throughout the life-span seem to be made readily and easily it might be fair to assume that the early training of the nursery school had not been without effect in this process. But without waiting for this long perspective we may ask ourselves in the meantime what can be learned about the value of social discipline from observation of the children as they react in the immediate social situation.

Judgment by One's Peers: We are all peculiarly susceptible to the opinions of those who are at approximately the same level of development as ourselves. We measure ourselves by what the other members of our class are able to do. Little children, sheltered in the family, or forced into unequal competition with children older than themselves, may lack this opportunity to try themselves in an even contest. The nursery school allows this, though it adds no pressure to the situation as does the regular school with its emphasis on records, competitive examinations and tests. The child is allowed to find his level in a situation which offers a maxim of social opportunity with a minimum of social restraint. This is a highly educative process.

Social Ostracism: The child who by reason of disposition or bad training is antisocial in his behavior is quickly made to feel the weight of group pressure. If he persistently hits and destroys he will be excluded from group play. The older children will frown upon him if his behavior fails to please them. "That's very silly," uttered in a tone of scorn is a more crushing rebuke than an adult would dare to apply. Russell has remarked on this point, that children will stand from one another more severe punishment than adults would think of using.* They are at the same time more sensitive to the opinions of other children than to those of adults. Social disapproval which is natural and spontaneous, and which is not an expression of an adult attitude of disparagement, may be wholesomely corrective with the child who offends. If he can learn socially acceptable behavior while he is young the path will be smoothed for him as he grows older. If he does not learn it then the chances are that he will not learn it so well, or will do so only at much greater cost and with many compensations the longer the adjustment is postponed.

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* Russell, Bertrand, *Education and the Good Life,* Boni and Liveright, New York, 1926, p. 180.

Social Justice: It is interesting that children get a rudimentary but valuable sense of social justice from regular and regulated play with other children. They learn to share their possessions or rather to possess in common. They learn that use is right, that only the child who is making a good use of material can retain it, and even then that he must recognize a certain right in the other children to share.

Leadership: The fundamental lesson, of course, which inheres in all social play is that which was indicated at the beginning of the chapter; readiness to lead or to follow as the occasion may demand. It is often said that what society needs most is people who can lead, who have social inventiveness and ability to imagine and realize new forms of social life. Such inventiveness posits also readiness on the part of others to recognize merit and to follow when it is clear that the leader knows where he is going and is moving towards a goal that is worth while.

As we have been trying to emphasize the importance of leadership as a factor in control it is worth asking ourselves, What constitutes effective leadership among children? What sort of child do other children readily follow? And what types of leadership are desirable among children? The child who is inventive and imaginative, who can think of new things to do and then direct the doing of them is the effective leader. It is always instructive and often amusing to watch the development of these leadership trends. For instance, in the nursery school on one occasion a child, who by reason of intelligence rather than of good social adaptation was the self-constituted leader of the group, decided to have all the other children carry chairs into the playroom and place them in a line. She then commanded her satellites to sit on the chairs. But after placing them she had come to the end of her resources, she could think of nothing further to do. The group became boisterous and insubordinate and a teacher had to step in to suggest another activity. Had the children been somewhat older the play would have carried over into a game—school, a train or something of the sort. But that represented a stage of development just beyond the range of either leader or group.

A domineering type of leadership readily passes over into bullying and interference, in which case it ceases to be leadership as the other children simply slip out from under the clutches of the would-be leader. Indeed, a large measure of social tact—pliability and willingness to fall in line with others' play when one's own is not accepted would seem to be necessary for the successful leader. The child who dominates by superior ability is not always the most popular child. Indeed it is noteworthy that the child most often selected as playmate by the other individuals in the group may not be the child in whom leadership trends are most prominent. Social adaptability and the intellectual prestige necessary for leadership are not always co-existent virtues.

The child who instead of *ordering* demonstrates his ability to think of more things to do and does them better than the other children is, however, almost sure of a following. It is this trend of leadership which we wish to foster among children. It implies that the good leader is really independent of his followers. Leadership of the domineering type is bad because it is the expression of a need for some one to be subservient to one's wishes. In a fairly homogeneous group, the group develops its own immunities against the domineering leader. How far the would-be leader is herself cured by the mutiny of her followers is an open question.

Relations Among Children at Different Age Levels.

The nursery school may serve as a laboratory in which to study the relations of a group of children with one another. The same basic tendencies may then be noted in the home situation. The family, however, offers certain important points of contrast with the nursery school, one of the most significant of which is the close relationships among children of different age levels. Russell discusses this in a most suggestive fashion, pointing out the values that inhere in relationships of children with those older, younger and of contemporary age. It will be noted that towards an older child the relationship is what we have described as submission or compliance; with imitation and subordinate coöperation as the characteristic advantages of this association. Towards a younger child the older child must show kindness and consideration, the virtue of the strong towards the weak, and we have pointed out that the nursery school sometimes shows a spurious form of this virtue in the "mothering" impulse of a slightly older child. The age difference is here too slight to permit of real responsibility on the part of the older member, and the effect is usually irksome to the younger child. There is, also, by reason of the nursery school environment, no need of this protective care of one child for the other; it is a play rather than a real outgrowth of the situation. Within the home this is quite different. There are many services which a child several years older may render to one younger. Where this is a genuine relationship, involving dependence on one side and responsibility on the other, it can have real disciplinary value for both. Perhaps a word of caution should be added upon the unfairness of saddling an older child with the care of a younger child. After all, the child is still a child, not a nurse, and she should not be prematurely freighted with adult cares. A modicum of responsibility, carefully regulated to the needs of both children, is, however, highly desirable.

The further point that leadership trends are developed in the older child by directing the play of younger children is one that has been emphasized in the discussion of the nursery school situation. They may become a disadvantage if the age difference is so great that the older child is an unquestioned authority and is allowed to dominate the situation.

Age Differences in the Family.

The fact of age difference, which is minimized in the nursery school, is, of course, a fundamental feature of family life. It carries with it important implications for discipline. It is sometimes assumed that all children should be treated alike. Nothing could be more unfair to the children concerned. For differences in age and position are real, not adventitious differences, and as such should be recognized. Age as it gives added responsibilities should bring with it added privileges. This should be recognized in definite ways, by augmenting the child's allowance, extending the bed-time hour, modifying the child's clothes, allowing more freedom in going outside the home and so on. As long as the younger child is made to feel that these privileges are accorded to age and not to the individual he will accept them, as he will know that when he reaches the same stage of development he will have the same opportunities. Whereas to treat two children of let us say a couple of years difference in age as if they were on a level is to be unfair to both. The younger child is being asked to measure up to a standard too advanced; the older child is being held back unjustifiably. The case in the records of the mother who had always dressed her two children alike and meted out exactly the same treatment to them is an illustration of the difficulties which may develop when such a scheme is followed. Recognition of age and status helps to develop individuality.

The Only Child.

Contrary to prevailing assumption the only child does not appear to offer special difficulties, though when she is bad we are told that she is very, very bad. Probably the converse is true, that abnormal goodness is more likely to be found with only children because they have comparatively little opportunity to be naughty. Adults conform themselves to the child whereas with other children the child is forced to make a larger effort of her own towards social adaptation. Therefore the only child suffers by lack of the discipline which can be supplied only by such contacts. The nursery school promises to be the salvation of many only children, in that it supplies them with an abundance of social opportunity of a natural and spontaneous sort.

Position in the Family.

The last child in a family where the other brothers and sisters are much older is virtually in the position of an only child. He may really be worse off in some respects; the only child has to conform merely to the wishes of his parents; the last child may be managed by his parents and by his older brothers and sisters as well. Faults of behavior in such a child are common and can usually be traced to over-stimulation by the family, too much managing or too much spoiling.

If the oldest child is apt to suffer from a sense of superiority engendered by his position of leadership, the middle child may feel herself inferior. She receives neither the responsibility of the oldest nor the consideration of the youngest, but is likely to be passed over in the family picture. She may therefore try to compensate by bizarre and often trying forms of behavior, designed really to call attention to herself. Such a situation can be remedied only when parents understand what underlies the child's rebellion.

It might seem from this that no matter what one's position in the family it was impossible to be a happy or well-adjusted child. The emphasis should be rather the other way. Each position has its own peculiar advantages as well as difficulties, but if these latter are recognized allowance can be made for them and special forms of treatment planned to meet the child's special needs. No general rule, but consideration and adjustment of each individual case is the thing desired.

The Need for Companionship.

The one thing that stands out clearly as a result of the recent advances in child study is the child's need of companionship, and the desirability of providing that companionship at a relatively early age. When parents realize the importance for the social development of their children of properly regulated intercourse with other children they will not be content till they have secured this for them.

Adult Intervention.

Managing: There are certain problems which adults have to face in regard to relations among children. How far, for example, should adults stimulate and direct the activities of a group of children? The practice of the nursery school could be noted by most homes with excellent results: see that the children have plenty of materials with which to occupy themselves, but enter the situation directly only if the children are playing in an aimless or wanton fashion. Give only enough suggestion to start them on some constructive work, then step out of the picture again leaving them to their own resources. The illustration of the mother who kept interfering in the play of the children who were visiting her own child is a good illustration of what *not* to do. Children who are suppressed and ill at ease in the presence of adults will often make a very good adjustment as soon as the adults withdraw from the situation.

Refereeing Quarrels: The case in the illustrations of the mother who followed the policy of separating children when they quarreled without trying to find the rights of the matter and apportion praise and blame is an excellent one. It shows how one can in the regulation of children approximate the uniformity of natural law while keeping the complicating influences of social approval and disapproval at a minimum. That is, the children learn that quarreling means separation; if this practice is consistently followed by the adult the desire for companionship is likely to be strong enough to outweigh the tendency to quarrel. Endless argument and discussion are saved if one refuses to hear and arbitrate cases. The chances of getting at the root of the matter are so slim that, as this parent suggests, it is better to abandon them and apply a simple rule, clearly understood by children quarreling. Parents cannot be present, nor is it desirable that they should be with children at all times. As they cannot therefore know the facts at first hand they are wiser not to try to apportion praise and blame, but to act so as to prevent quarreling from becoming a habit. Where children are determined to fight it out they should be allowed to do it unless the odds are so uneven that one child is likely to suffer bodily harm.

Reducing Social Pressure: This would seem to be an important responsibility of adults, to decide when the group situation is becoming too much for the child and when he needs to be alone. While social play is important it is equally important that the child should be able to escape from the group to be by himself. This is possible in many homes—in the public school situation it is equally needed though seldom provided.

> "I recall vividly that when I first went to school I used to be weary from the continual buzz of a roomful of children. My teacher, who was very understanding in her methods, would allow me to take my slate and sit on the woodpile in the little vestibule adjoining the school. I remember the look of the little place, even the feel of the thick sticks of wood. But most vividly of all I can recall the satisfaction with which I looked in at the forms filled with children and savored my remoteness from that busy throng. I was not naturally averse to society, and these withdrawals were temporary interludes, but they did give me an exquisite relief from the constant society of other children."

What the little log schoolhouse provided in this instance is not always furnished by even our most up-to-date schools.

Porter Lee,* in the paper which we have referred to above, has called attention to *privacy* as another of the experiences from which children derive satisfaction.

> "By privacy I mean the possession of time, facilities, opportunities or material things, the use of which is, for the time being at least, within one's own control. Privacy in this sense is indispensable to satisfying existence. It does not suggest anything anti-social. It does not mean solitude which connotes

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* Lee, Porter R., *The Family as a Constructive Force in Mental Hygiene,* Advance Printing, First International Congress on Mental Hygiene, pp. 9 and 10.

a status in which intercourse with other human beings is more or less impossible. Privacy, on the other hand, suggests a deliberate withdrawal from immediate social contacts for purposes which may be highly social. A sense of privacy may be achieved by as simple means as the possession of one end of a shelf in a crowded home which is sacred to one's own belongings. It may come on a grander scale through possession of an apartment of one's own with time in which to use it by oneself. Privacy is a form of human experience within which one may guide his own destinies, reach his own decisions, make his own choice among all possible alternatives unhampered by the demands of others.

"With the decreasing size of the family habitat privacy in its more obvious forms is increasingly difficult to secure. It is evident, however, that privacy has more ramifications than superficially appear. There is privacy in possessions as well as in space and privacy also in privileges, avocations and whimsical activities. It represents a type of constructive experience which in some form is well within the reach of every one, although most of us could use more than we are able to achieve. When . . . it is brought within the reach of children by parents as a normal part of daily routine, it is one of the great constructive forces of family life."

It therefore rests with parents to see that children have alternating experiences of privacy and of social life in order that their fullest development may be atttained.

OUTLINE IX

RELATIONS AMONG CHILDREN

I. Fundamental Social Tendencies:
  Self-assertion—mastery, dominance.
  Self-negation—dependence, submission.

II. Submissive Traits:
  Withdrawal—watching,
    —avoiding.
  Compliance—imitation,
    —coöperation,
    —appeals for help,
    —submission.

III. Dominance Traits:
  Resistance.
  Interference.
  Initiative—stimulation,
    —organization and direction,
    —"mothering."

IV. Values of Children's Discipline:
  Judgment by one's peers.
  Ostracism.
  Justice.

V. Adult Intervention:
  Dealing with Disputes.
  Reducing Social Pressure.

VI. References:
  Johnson, Harriet—*Children in the Nursery School,* pp. 81-101, 230-253.
  Russell, Bertrand—*Education and the Good Life.* Chapter X.

VII. Questions:

1. How far is conformity to group standards desirable in children?
2. What are the dangers of a precocious social development?

ILLUSTRATIONS IX

I. *Compliance and Resistance.*

Indifference to Social Standards:

Parent: "The asocial child I have in mind is a little older than my little girl. The other children—this was when we were on our summer vacation—just loved to play group games, but this child of three and a half would never play. People tried not to force him, but every effort was made to make the games attractive. He never made any attempt to join in the group. So far as we could see, the three summer months with the other children didn't make the slightest difference in his behavior."

Leader: "Were there any other three-year-olds in the group?"

Parent: "Two were older, and one younger, just six months' difference in one case."

Leader: "It would seem that there were other factors at work."

Parent: "Don't you think in a child like that, if he has any special talent it will come out as a compensation? Doesn't this effort to attain equality have its disadvantages? I'm just raising the question."

"My little boy will be seven in a few weeks. He has not been much with other children, as he has not yet been sent to school. He cannot see why he should do anything because any one else does it, or because it is the thing to do. That has not been developed in him. It may be that he has not yet reached that stage. I should think that school will hasten that development, making him want to be like the other boys."

Question: What are the advantages of this attitude in a child, and what are the disadvantages?

Social Conformity:

"Margaret shows signs of the influence of an older child. At dancing school she is enamoured of a little girl called Margery. She thinks that Margery is perfect; she arranges her hair just so and says, 'I think that looks like Margery's.' She does not watch the teacher at all, she is so infatuated with Margery."

"The other day one of the younger children in the school had an accident. Her comment was, 'We never wet our pants in the Nursery School.'"

"How should one deal with a girl of ten who seems never to want to play alone? She is absolutely miserable if she has to stay in the house without any of her child companions."

Question: Can one have too much social conformity?

II. *Leadership or Interference.*

"My girl of eleven tries to regulate her brother, who is nineteen months older. She is far keener than he is; he just manages to keep one grade ahead of her in school. She is a very managing child. Things must always be just so—to her liking or she will be unhappy. She tries to direct the children on the street with whom she plays. She mothers the children under five, but the older ones she quarrels with if they do not do what she wants."

Question: What factors other than the child's tendency to manage complicate the relation with her brother?

"I found that Godfrey was willing and wanted to do a lot for Billy but it had an entirely different effect on Billy. He didn't want Godfrey to do anything for him; he would say, 'I want to do it myself.'"

"A child wanted to help my little girl but she objected because she was too 'bossy.'"

"My boy is older than the girl by one-and-a-half years. If I go out he takes the responsibility of looking after things and my little girl takes it for granted that he should because he is the oldest and she minds him very well. I have made an appointment with him to meet me downtown to-day after this meeting. He is to bring her down; they'll take the bus and I meet them when they get off. She does not concern herself and he likes the idea of being responsible. I have, however, found that she is a little too dependent on him."

"My eldest is very autocratic. Nothing the younger ones can do comes up to what she can do. She knows more than they do. This fall she was with my sister whose children are two and four years older than mine and let me tell you, she came back a much more modest girl. It had helped her a great deal, having to come up against those older children who could do things as well and better than she."

"Mine are very particular about their things. They each have their own things but one wouldn't dare touch the other's, or there is a row. Kathie is the older one and she thinks that Betty can't do things herself so she wants to mother Betty, which is terribly resented. She just won't have the older one help her. If she cannot do up buttons, she insists on me helping her rather than let Kathie do it."

"There was a row upstairs. George called me to come up quickly. Phyllis had a hammer and was saying she was going to kill him. She was playing with his toys and when he came home he wanted them. They are his, but he doesn't use them now. He wanted to show her how to do something and she didn't want him to."

"I find it an advantage to have a slightly older child (cousin) play with my two boys; he helps them and stimulates new activities."

III. *Teasing.*

"My little boy teases his younger sister at meal times. Talking to him seems to have no effect. It seems to be exuberance of spirits on his part; he pokes and touches her continually. This irritates and tantalizes her. I have never separated them as this would be to admit that I could not control the situation."

Question: What type of control should be used?

"My baby teases the big one. For example, when he is writing on the blackboard she slides up and rubs it off. The other day he was playing with soldiers on the floor and she kept sliding up until she knocked them over. I wonder if I should keep them apart? She'd live away by herself if I did. I've forbidden him to hurt her. It's my problem. When she's a little older she'll have to learn to take the consequences."

Question: How would you set about to adjust this family?

"My child of two and a half gets angry over teasing. A little boy who lives on the same street, four years old, teases him. My child stamps his feet and Bertie comes along and takes the toy and jumps away. Russell begins to play with a toy and Bertie comes and does it again. I separate them. I either take Russell into the house until he quiets or send Bertie home. It does not take long. Bertie does not want to go home. I usually take Russell in."

"My little girl was going out to play with a little boy and pushed him in fun. He treated her rather roughly in return and she started to cry. She just bellowed. I told her if she expected to play with Samuel she would have to take those little knocks, otherwise she could not play. He did not mean to hurt her. I told her if she was going to play with him she would have to be a sport and take it. I also said to Samuel that even with boys we could be less rough. He did not mean it. She was not really hurt. It was just unexpected."

"Can you tell me how to teach a child to be a good sport? My older child, Betty, cries and comes to tell me whenever any one does anything in play to which she objects, throws snow on her, for instance. The younger child takes all this as part of the game and never complains. I try to discourage Betty from tale-bearing but without much success. Her own younger sister plays so well.

"The same thing is apparent when their father plays with them. Betty will tease him to come and romp with them, yet when he does it she immediately begins to cry and say that he is too rough. Yet Katherine will take the same treatment and not complain, just think it is fun.

"Lately Betty has attempted to boss Katherine and Katherine is rebelling against it. Says, 'No, I won't do that,' and appeals to me when Betty tries to manage her."

IV. *Social Ostracism.*

"May it not be that children influence one another far more than adults can hope to influence them? The children on our street decided to ostracize a child they play with. We undertook to discuss it with our children. Nothing we said had the slightest effect. It made me realize that probably we should not interfere in a case like that even though children seem so cruel in their behavior. It certainly impressed upon me the difference in the susceptibility of children to the opinion of adults and of other children."

"Lou. was ostracized by three or four children. I was puzzled because I wanted them to play with him. The trouble was that he wouldn't give up his things to them. However, he finally learned that he had to. I noticed that in the group of five, one or the other was always the under-dog."

V. *Parents' Attitudes to Quarreling.*

"My girl of seven gets into wonderful fights. There was a girl up the street annoying the children with snowballs. My girl hit her with her fists. The mother came up and asked me where Alice was, but Alice had beaten a retreat. My maid called her and the neighbor said: 'Did you hit Joyce?' She said, 'Yes.' The neighbor wasn't pleasant. Alice said, 'Why doesn't Mrs. A. teach Joyce to fight her own battles like you teach me?' I think it is pretty bad to let a child hurt another. My child was bigger. I don't want her to damage the child. At the same time I dislike interfering."

"I interfere in quarreling when it becomes dangerous, when one is going for the other one's head."

"They should learn to take their own part in give and take. I do not think we should stop them. I do not think we should tell them anything and should not stop them. If one child takes toys I never stop either of them. Is not that the way they learn give and take?"

"I was out the other day with my little girl of eighteen months where there was a child of the same age. In the nursery the other child had everything and my child nothing. The mother kept saying to her child: 'Give this, give that.' I thought she talked too much; it was the 'guest' idea emphasized."

"I do not know whether my system is good or not. If I know the facts of the case, having seen it, then I settle it. If I don't, I send them to separate rooms. I try not to have any scolding or participation on my part. 'Bill hit me,' 'The reason I hit him was because he kicked me,' 'I kicked him because he took my wagon.' This sort of thing can go on until it is impossible to unravel the real rights of the matter. I just say, 'I am sorry, children. It is impossible for me to deal with this. You go upstairs till you feel like playing with one another.' Then I leave it to them to decide when they want to come down and play again."

Leader: "What should one do when children in the neighborhood fight with one another?"

First Parent: "I bring my children home; otherwise, I should be out all day settling fights."

Second Parent: "Take an impartial attitude, and let each child state his case. Do not let your child dominate because it is his garden, his toys, etc."

Third Parent: "I try to see who is right if they are old enough."

Fourth Parent: "One can reason with them."

Fifth Parent: "It depends on the situation. If mine are quarreling over a toy, I make them give it up."

First Parent: "Let them learn to take turns."

Fifth Parent: "I find it best to isolate the quarrelsome child."

Sixth Parent: "What should be the attitude of the parent when children get angry with one another? Should they be allowed to fight it out? I mean when they are small."

Leader: "You have to use your own judgment. When you are right in front of a situation and know just what has been going on, then settle it if necessary. But so often we are somewhere else and hear a yell and then interfere before we know what has really happened. In that case, it is better simply to say, 'Now, if you cannot get along without fighting you had better separate,' and then proceed to separate them."

V. *Companionship of Children of Different Ages.*

"What about the ages of children playing together? If they are of the same age, they all want the same toy. You can't have enough of everything to go around. It is hard to make two- and three-year-olds take turns. And then in the case of a four-year-old playing with a two-year-old, should the older one always give in?"

"Should a parent be present when two children of the same age are playing together, or should she interfere later—after the trouble occurs?"

"They learn not to be so selfish playing with other children. If they are alone they want things themselves; if they play with others they learn to divide up. I hate to see one child not want to share up. I hate to see a child selfish and not want another child to touch their things. Sometimes I found Margaret that way before she got in with other children. If she had anything we could not touch it. Her brother could not touch anything that belonged to her."

"What would you do with a selfish baby who wants all the toys himself? When my little girl sees anybody pick up toys, she snatches and wants them back."

"Is it better for a child of two to play alone than with a child of four? My child of two plays with a girl of four. He's too small to know what she means but he just loves her. The other day she knocked him flat on his face and cut his chin. She explained that she wanted his cart and knocked him off to get it. I don't know what he'd do if he got treated that way in the house. She bosses him around. Sometimes he shows a little assertion. The other day he took his sleigh away from her and she went crying in the house to her mother. Usually, they both want the same thing."

"Is the individual parent up against an impossible situation in trying to get children in the family of different ages to play together? Would it be better to try to get children of the same age from outside?"

Parent: "What would you do if you thought that a certain companion was influencing your child not in the best way?"

Leader: "Counteract it. You may rest assured that if a child is influenced in a way that isn't right, there is a lack in the home. For instance, if it takes the form of sex play, you may be sure there is a lack of sex education."

"My little girls are only two years apart, and I have always treated them alike, dressing them in the same way, allowing them to do the same things. Now I wonder if I have been wise. The older child is a grade ahead in school and the younger is beginning to resent this and to show jealousy. The older one in turn is becoming impatient of not being allowed to do things that her younger sister cannot do."

PART IV

TYPES OF MOTIVATION

CHAPTER X

LEVELS OF ACTION

THROUGHOUT the preceding discussion we have been concerned with the question of how to get action from the child, in particular how to stimulate certain forms of behavior and to check others. In this we have spoken of action from different angles, namely the kind which is prompted by influence from *without,* that is through *control,* and also the kind which is generated and regulated from *within,* by the child himself, that is through *self-control.* It is time to look more closely at the nature of action in order to clarify our views of the relationship between outer and inner control. To maintain a proper balance between these as the child develops seems to us the main objective in any system of discipline for the management of children.

The Concept of Activity.

Let us first get our bearings on one or two points of method in order to make a start. When one studies the world at large, either the world of objects or of living things, it may be noted first that what always catches our attention and provokes our interest and curiosity is some fact of action. Things move, appear, disappear, reappear, change, grow,—Why? Secondly, it may be noted that in trying to find relevant answers or explanations one always accepts some points as axiomatic and elaborates others for his answer; the accepted points are simply taken for granted as not open to question, while other points become our target for enquiry. Now in viewing the world at large the fact of activity in whatever form is such an accepted point; for scientific purposes one does not ask *whether* there is activity or *why* there should be activity—one starts by accepting this or that activity as an observed fact. What one then asks is *how* that particular form of activity came to pass, that is, What are the conditions of activity in other things that make possible the one in question? In so far as these determining conditions can be known and controlled they offer a means of bringing about or of checking the said activity, namely by management of those conditions on which it depends. Our understanding of relations thus makes possible more intelligent practice. But usually only approximate answers can be arrived at, so that complex activity is understood only in part. For this reason general statements about action in man can at best express only probability of outcome,—tendencies of action, not predictions, are all that can be formulated.

Recognizing that activities can be observed and their conditions analyzed, how do we proceed? The first step is to classify those activities which interest us. This leads us in child study to adopt the convenient two-fold classification first mentioned, which though rough is helpful. On the one hand are activities of the child which can be thought of mainly as controlled from without. Conditions which thus govern behavior constitute external control, for example, the physical environment, but even more the social environment. On the other hand are activities of the child which are best thought of as controlled mainly from within by himself. This form of behavior depends on self-control. This second type of behavior is highly important in situations involving motivation, though both types are concerned. In fact it must be recognized that the two types of action here posited are not mutually exclusive but are usually intertwined. The hungry child seeks food and the physical environment or the parent satisfies this need; control of activity here is shared from within and from without, but the former is more fundamental. The parent may withhold the food, offer a choice, or require a certain deportment, thus directing the activity; nevertheless the drive is from within, for if there were no appetite there would be no activity for food. Indeed the loss of all activity from within is tantamount to what we call death.

To sum up: The interplay of organism and environment is as continuous as life: Action to some degree always involves both of these, and control of action is never exclusively either from within or from without, but in both directions with a nice balance of give and take. From this standpoint, since our task is to understand, not the natural world but the living individual, it is helpful to consider activity as being basically from within, but as directed in its early stages largely from without by persons of larger experience. The aim of education is then to prepare the individual so that the reins may safely be passed over to him in terms of self-control.

Action from Within.

When the new-born infant nuzzles till it finds the mother's breast its action is determined, as we have said, from within by a basic need of the organism, its craving for food. This need is probably not consciously recognized at first, but it is sufficiently powerful to set up in the organism seeking movements which can only be assuaged when food is found. Satisfaction normally brings quiescence, the needs of the child's digestive economy having been met, his general behavior lapses into quietness until the physiological processes set up by the ingestion of food have run their course. Then the appetite of hunger again asserts itself, and once more the rhythm of hunger, search, satisfaction, satiety, runs its appointed course. So with the other specific appetites, as thirst, elimination, sex; so too with the more general urge to motor activity with its alternate rhythm of quiescence or sleep.* In the case of these appetites action arises from a bodily need, conscious or unconscious, which satisfies itself in relation to some feature of the external environment, which it appropriates for its uses. Action is from within outwards.

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* For a detailed discussion of motivation in terms of the basic appetites see *Parents and the Pre-School Child,* Wm. Morrow Co., 1929. Chapter II, also pp. 295-301. To the appetites there enumerated should be added the tendency of the organism to maintain a constant temperature, which Woodworth properly stresses. This is the basis of our search for clothing and for shelter, with all the ramifications of these into economic and social life. See Woodworth, R. W., *Psychology,* Henry Holt and Co., New York, revised edition, 1929, p. 248.

Regulation from Without.

But the course of action may not run so smoothly. The baby may not seek the breast, the nipple may have to be presented to him frequently, and he may even refuse to take it, turning away his head, squirming, kicking and thrashing in definite resistance to the presented object. He may have to be *taught* to nurse, by which we only mean that the nipple will have to be presented again and again till the child *wants* to take it. Action from the environment is in this case directed repeatedly towards the child in the hope that it may stimulate him to act towards the environment. Not till this has been done has a good adjustment been effected.

Again, the environment may impinge on the child in other ways. Had our hypothetical baby happened to have been one of the infants with whom John B. Watson conducted his illuminating experiments,* he would have been prodded, pinched, poked, dropped through space, had his blanket jerked as he was going to sleep, had his limbs and head held tightly in a constricted position, and so on. In such cases the environment is not politely waiting for the child to appropriate it, it thrusts itself rudely on him regardless of his likes or dislikes. The reflection of this is seen in the child's response, his withdrawal from sudden or violent stimuli, his resistance to restraint. In such cases the inner adjustment of the organism is being disrupted by the injection of unacceptable influences from without. The organism exerts itself to escape or to ward off these impinging forces in order that its equanimity may be restored.

Now, if we apply the findings from this relatively simple level of behavior to the more complex activities which we have been studying it will be seen that we have been concerned largely with action from the environment towards the child. We have been looking at the child from without, to see how we could present bits of the environment to him in such a way that they would evoke from him the kind of action which we desired. The movement has been from without inwards, from the circumference to the center of the circle.

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* Watson, John B., *ibid.*, Chapter VI.

There are two main considerations, already evident in our illustration of the baby, which are important in respect of such external control. The first is that it is always secondary in importance, being subsidiary to the basic needs of the individual. The second follows from the first, namely, that the possibilities of emotional disturbance, resistance, maladjustment, are always latent in external control.

External Control Secondary.

Original motivation must always proceed from within and be governed by the basic needs of the organism. External control is adequate only when it relates itself harmoniously to such inner impulses. If the child will not nurse, we cannot make him. Also, if he asks bread we must not offer him a stone. External control to be successful must take into account the basic needs of the child and be tempered to suit their state and stage of growth. Throughout the preceding chapters we have tried to emphasize this cardinal principle though it may not have been explicitly stated. Thus, that environmental control is truly effective only when it dovetails into the child's need, was the point when we argued that our provision of play materials should satisfy the child's need of activity, or that the sympathetic understanding of the adult should meet the child's need of some one on whom he can rely and in whom he can confide. Activity from within is thus primary, that from without remaining secondary.

Generating Resistance.

Our second point of emotional disturbance is not less important. It will be recognized that the environment, particularly that part of it which is made up of human beings, has an astonishing capacity for going counter to the wishes of the child. Reasons for this in the family circle have been touched on, but it is also a point of far-reaching biological import. Each individual organism in order to survive must be equipped with powerful drives or tendencies to action; its own needs are prepotent, and it uses its surroundings without scruple to satisfy those needs. Where the environment is not amenable to being appropriated in this fashion, or where the environment is itself actively aggressive against the young invader, then strife is bound to ensue. Thwarting of an appetite produces the strongest emotional reaction of which the child is capable. Yet much adult control is framed in terms of just such thwarting. Strife is inevitably engendered.

Now there are occasions when the interference of the adult in the course of the child's behavior is absolutely necessary. We must snatch him from under the wheels of a motor car, or remove him when he is a menace to the goods or persons of other people. But our position throughout this book has been that parents interfere with their children's activities when it is not necessary to do so, and that interference of this sort which generates resistance and emotional stress should as far as possible be avoided. This does not mean a *laissez faire* policy of non-intervention, because adults must inevitably play a part in the child's environment. It means that adult control should not be arbitrary and personal but systematic and unbiased, copying if one can the pattern of control which the natural world exacts, and which the child learns to respect and take for granted.

The Appetites and the Routine.

There is, however, one kind of experience in which both the need for intervention and the ministry to the child's needs have equal place, and that is in respect of the routine. The routine is definitely planned to satisfy the child's appetites, but to satisfy them not on demand but according to a plan, based on the parent's judgment of what is appropriate, reënforced if necessary by expert advice. We may, therefore, have a situation in which basic needs are met but into which strife also enters because they are met according to the adult's plan, not according to the child's whim. The social conditioning of the appetites has been discussed in detail in our previous book, we wish here to call attention only to *consistency* in the enforcement of the routine as the factor which will most minimize resistance from the child and prove conducive to a good adjustment on his part so that he learns to satisfy his needs in ways which are socially acceptable.

As our interest from this point on is less in the rationale of external control than in the development of control from within, let us, instead of standing outside and watching the picture as spectators, attempt to step within the frame and try to see what it looks like when we view the situation, not as onlookers but as participants. That is, we will shift our interest from external control to inner motivation.

Entering the Child's World.

This is, of course, a shift in point of view rather than in subject matter. Instead of standing outside and asking ourselves how we may act on the child to produce certain reactions in him we take our stand beside him to discover if possible why he acts as he does. It makes a vast difference in out assessing of human behavior whether we look at it from inside or from without. Not that it is ever really possible to step inside another's life, but that the imaginative effort to realize another's experience gives a degree of insight impossible from the external point of view. Such insight is one of the best ways of securing real coöperation with our efforts to modify the behavior of another. Immanent criticism, which rests on a true appraisal of the motives of the person judged, is alone of value. Praise and blame, on the other hand, are expressions of our attitudes from without rather than a recognition of the motives of the one we are trying to guide. Blame is almost the poorest form of control; it expresses our own annoyance and intolerance, without seeking a sympathetic understanding of the act which is being condemned.

Children particularly need the sympathetic interpretation of their behavior which criticism from within involves. It is not always easy for adults to appreciate the motives which govern children's behavior; to the adult much seems meaningless and bizarre which is quite obvious from the point of view of the child. Lack of facility with language as well as ignorance of social usages puts the child at a disadvantage in his communications with adults. More experimental work by psychologists on the reasoning processes of both adults and children is highly to be desired, but from the work that has been reported the differences seem to be marked. Jean Piaget,* for instance, has taken the position that the forms of the child's thinking are quite different from those of adult thought. It seems to us that a simpler explanation may be adequate, that the difference lies not in the nature of their reasoning so much as in the limited experiences from which children draw their inferences. But however the difference is to be explained, the fact remains that there is a gap to be bridged between the world of the adult and that of the child.

The imaginative effort necessary to enter the child's world is made by comparatively few adults. By imagination we mean not fanciful interpretation, but a patient, intelligent effort to unravel the child's motives, to put oneself in his place, to see the world from his point of view. Abbott comments on this with his usual acumen: †

> "Thus, to bring ourselves near to the hearts of children, we must go to them by entering into *their world*. They cannot come to us by entering ours. They have no experience of it and do not understand it. But we have had experience of theirs, and can enter it if we choose; and in that way we bring ourselves very near to them."

An Inner View of Adult Experience.

If it is important to learn to look at the child's experience from within it is equally important not to abandon this point of vantage when looking at ourselves. Of late

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* Piaget, Jean, *Language and Thought of the Child,* Harcourt, Brace and Co., New York, 1926, also *Judgment and Reasoning in the Child,* New York, 1928.

† Abbott, Jacob, *ibid.,* p. 133.

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years some Behaviorists and Psycho-Analysts have done much to popularize a kind of psychological determinism which is the inevitable result of an approach to human conduct in terms of external forces. As a result the individual is viewed as the resultant of a complex of forces, or of a force of complexes which have operated to make him what he is; he is what his parents, his teachers, or the accidents of his early experience have made him. The child is thus condoned in terms of his parents, but the parents in turn must not be held responsible, they are what they are by reason of the forces which have molded them,—and so on in endless regression till, using Omar Khayyám's logic, we can blame Eve's apple on God, and free human nature of every vestige of responsibility. This would seem a *reductio ad absurdum* of the external view of human nature.

In actual experience, however, we feel the situation from within instead of regarding it from without; we have the intense conviction of ourselves as one of the determining factors in our life stories, and as such responsible to a great degree for the direction of events. Reproof and blame are as poor ways of motivating parents as they are of children, but to give parents the impression that they are not personally responsible for what they do to their children would be even more unfortunate.

If it be urged that freedom is merely an illusion, that the power to choose and to modify a course of action does not really exist, one may at least take the pragmatic position that it does make a difference in our conduct and management if we act on the assumption that we are active participants rather than pawns in the game. It is helpful to think of oneself as a modifying influence in experience, and we believe that it is of signal importance to train children to accept this dynamic view of themselves as responsible for their own actions. How this is brought about must next be considered.

From Appetites to Ends.

While organic needs are the beginning they are never the end of the human story. In their simplest manifestation they express a *direction* of the human individual towards some part of his environment. The infant searches for its mother's breast, the baby reaches for his rattle, the child chases a butterfly, the youth walks with his sweetheart, and in each case there is a rapport between individual impulse and some environmental condition. We have thus in the simplest as well as in the most evolved forms of behavior the two factors which we may characterize as *appetites* and *ends*. The former is the biological impulse, enriched by growing experience, the latter some object, physical or ideal, towards which that impulse moves. Thus even in the simplest forms of behavior an end is present in some rudimentary form though not consciously recognized as such. Similarly, in the most complex levels of conduct it is doubtful if the appetites ever completely fade from the picture. The man who voluntarily dies for a cause with which he has identified himself sacrifices appetites to ends, but he certainly does not ignore them.

The Child's Choice of Ends.

We earlier described that process of selective attention by which the developing infant progresses from sensory experience and builds objects of ever-increasing complexity into the structure of this experience. This type of integration is of varying degrees; to some perceived objects we are relatively indifferent, though probably none remains a thing-in-itself, adrift from us in the world. To many objects we feel "warm," as it were, adopting them to be part of ourselves. Thus the child builds up his world by ignoring many things while expropriating others to be part of his enlarged ego, "my mother," "my house," "my wagon," etc. This phenomenon of identification is of profound significance in the building up of personality. It means that values are determined, not in any absolute sense, but in terms of the person who assimilates the object. It means also that personality is defined in terms of those objects which we choose to assimilate. What is it that determines this choice in the child, and how may he be guided in his choice of goals so that he may realize a steady development of character and personality?

Goals for Children.

The first desideratum is that the goals towards which our children move must be their own, freely chosen because they meet some basic need in the child, not some idea of ours of what the child should want. But while parents should refrain from forcing their own interests on the child, they may make a positive contribution in helping him to choose goals which are practicable, and which he stands a fair chance of realizing. The example in the Illustrations of the five-year-old determined to build a full-size boat is a rather pathetic example of the disillusionment which a child is bound to experience when he is allowed to embark on a goal with which he is passionately identified but which lies beyond his power of achievement.

A good goal is usually one which lies just at or beyond the child's present power of performance, so that he must exert himself to the utmost to realize it. If it is too hard he will be discouraged and give up the attempt, but if it is just hard enough to call out all his latent powers he will gain a sense of mastery through the overcoming of difficulty.

The giving of help by the adult is a ticklish business calling for judgment and a high degree of restraint. If help is to be given it is usually best to give it at the beginning by helping the child to plan how he is going to carry through the enterprise on which he has embarked. Thus, in the case of the boy who always discarded his bird-houses because he could not make one that measured up to his ideal, a little help at the beginning in planning what he was going to do might have avoided his failures and consequent sense of frustration. On the other hand, one may be justified in waiting to see whether the child cannot plan and carry through his enterprise independently. The fact that children so often do some new thing in secret is an expression of their wish to proceed without help or suggestion. If he is stuck and turns to us, we may then be ready to aid our young experimenter. Help solicited will be received with a better grace than help thrust upon him.

This recalls Burnham's scheme of what is required, a task, a plan, and freedom.* And, we may add, the greatest of these is freedom. Unless they have been thoroughly tutored in the difficult art of letting children alone, parents find it hard to achieve that restraint which is in no sense indifference, but which involves leaving the child free to make his own trials and errors. We are forever saying, "Do this, Don't do that," yet we know, if we would stop to consider, how intolerable we ourselves find such well-meant advice when we are absorbed in some task that calls for our concentrated attention and effort. What wonder, then, that the harassed child often protests, "But I want to do it my *own* way." Our suggestions have diverted his attention from the business in hand, hindered his progress, and threatened to rob him of the educative value of his own experiments and his own mistakes. Burnham's comment on the child's need for freedom is worth quoting: †

> . . . "there are only two rules of prime importance in the education of young children: let them alone and set them a good example. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets as far as early pedagogy is concerned.
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> "If one is not reflective this seems easy. If one has thought the matter over, it appears infinitely hard. In the first place, it is extremely difficult to let children alone. We all have the feeling that the least we can do is to interfere; and in matters of morals and manners the issues at stake are so tremendously important that we feel that we should interfere as early as possible and as frequently as possible. The result of all this is apt to be either, on the one hand, premature development and unrelated precocious acquisitions; or else, on the other hand, dulling

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* Burnham, William, *The Normal Mind.* D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1925. Chapter VIII.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 549-550.

of feeling, so that the words and advice of parents and teachers have no influence. As already suggested, the best of discipline can be given in connection with the task itself."

The Habit of Realizing Goals.

This discipline of which Burnham speaks inheres in the carrying through of any undertaking to a successful conclusion. If a child forms this habit of realizing goals we need have little fear of his future. His choice of goals must, of course, be socially acceptable; that is he might be eminently successful in pilfering from his mother's purse, in stealing motor cars, in cheating his companions. Such forms of anti-social conduct are the expression of motives distorted from the ends in which they would normally find satisfaction. They are relatively infrequent; what does happen with appalling frequency is that people fail to realize worth-while goals in life because as children they did not form the habit of working with concentration towards a given end.

Ambition in the sense of a long-distance view is possibly of less import in the training of children than practice in the actual realizing of concrete goals at each level of development. To go to college may or may not be a desirable end for a boy; to carry through his immediate task with thoroughness and despatch, whether it be cutting the grass, building his boat, or doing home-work in arithmetic, is to lay the foundation for whatever form of achievement the future may indicate. Parents often tend to fix their gaze on the distant prospect, neglecting the all-important fact that the road to it lies in the successful present doing of little things. "My child shall be a forester," exclaimed an intellectual parent when his child was about six weeks old. There was no apparent reason for this choice, unless that forestry was as far removed from the father's interests and vocation as any calling could well be. A respect for the child's own bent should restrain us from thus parceling out his future. Meanwhile it is our responsibility to do all that we can to foster his own early attempts to realize the simple goals of childhood. These are prophetic of the realization of larger goals in adult life.

Changing Goals.

There is an inevitable progression of goals as the child grows, and fortunately so, else there would not be enough locomotives in the world for the wish fulfillments of infant engineers, nor enough wrong-doers to be arrested by aspiring policemen. The growing-up process is largely a story of new goals for old. Parents may become impatient with this sampling process, and may imagine that if they had their lives to live over again they would eliminate the waste involved in such experimenting with ends of action. It is doubtful whether this retrospect judgment is of value, since the choosing of goals is a part of the learning process, and so scarcely to be short-circuited. The objects and interests appropriate to maturity are very properly inappropriate to youth. An extreme case is that of a mother who came for advice about her son who showed a marked antagonism to entering the ministry. His father had been a minister, and she considered this the only proper vocation for his father's child. The clinician agreed to see the boy, though he could give no assurance of the outcome. "How old is your son?" he happened to ask. "Seven years," was the reply.

Not only do ends change in the life history of the individual, but they change in the history of races and peoples. One often hears it said that human nature is the same in all ages. If we are thinking of original motives this is probably true; appetites and emotions we may assume to have been the same for all men at all stages of history. Primitive man reacted to hunger, thirst, eliminative needs, sex, fear, and the craving for activity just as does the most sophisticated person of the present day. Similarly, adults as well as children are subject to original motives; we feel fear even though we try not to show it; hunger may upset our tempers as it does those of our children, the only difference is that we are more skilled in rationalizing our ill-humor. But while human nature is thus alike in its point of departure, it is startlingly diversified in the goals at which it arrives. The impulse remains the same, but the ends towards which actions are directed are constantly changing.

Our changing attitude to war illustrates this distinction. The people who argue that because there always have been wars that therefore there always will be wars, are arguing from the impulse aspects of our nature. War, they hold, satisfies certain inherent needs of man's nature, therefore war must remain a persistent factor in human experience. Those who argue against war do it in the belief that original impulse can be directed to other and equally satisfactory goals. Its perversions in greed and cruelty may be suppressed, but legitimate impulses towards activity, expansion, adventure, courage, hardihood, may be satisfied by being redirected towards new ends. William James saw this when he wrote on the Moral Equivalent of War.*

Changing Means.

Not only do ends change, but the means through which the same ends are realized become different with development. The baby lets fall his rattle, reaches vainly, and screams with anger when he fails; the runabout child in a similar predicament may get a stick and pull the object out where he can grasp it. The means by which ends are reached become increasingly significant as life advances. We think little of the one-year-old child snatching a toy from another, but such action would be reprehensible in a three-year-old, even though the toy were rightfully his. He must learn a more socially acceptable way of realizing his goal. Similarly, on the adult level, hunger is a fundamental drive with all human beings. But one man steals to satisfy hunger, the other applies himself to earning an honest living. The indirect means to gratification of appetite are often those which society approves.

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* James, William. *Memories and Studies.* Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1911.

Power to Wait.

If we may use a spatial figure, development consists largely in the lengthening chain between appetites and ends. On the level of impulsive action immediacy characterizes the relation. The young child has little power to restrain his wants, impulse overflows immediately into action. If what he wants is not directly available he must find a substitute or explode in an emotional storm. But something he must do, he cannot wait. Power to wait, on the other hand, is induced through social controls and is a sign of psychological maturity. It derives its cogency from the fact that postponed enjoyment means increased enjoyment. The greedy child snatches his cake and gulps it down, the more restrained child saves his till suppertime and eats it slowly and with relish. His enjoyment is enhanced if his greedy brother is there to watch with envious eyes. It is important for parents to see that power to wait, or lengthening endurance between appetites and ends, is not denied its meed of reward.

Also, the lengthening of the bond between appetite and end must be gradual and adjusted to the child's stage of development. It is often hard for adults to postpone enjoyment, how much more so for children who have relatively little practice in such control. Saving is a habit which it is not always easy for adults to acquire; it is hard to envisage the needs of old age when we are in our prime. Yet we expect children of six or seven to be enthusiastic about putting their pennies in the bank, when they see no tangible result of such restraint. To save for a coveted toy, on the other hand, would mean impulse directed towards an end within the range of the child's experience. Similarly, time has little meaning for the young child, to-morrow may seem to him as far removed as next month is to his parents. This also must be allowed for in our dealings with the child.

We have thus to envisage a state of affairs in which the developing individual is, as it were, pushed forward by original impulse, and jostled about by those competing ends which rival one another as claims on his interests. Meanwhile, he hangs suspended between the two forms of experience. At one end of the scale he is closely tied to his appetites,—as he moves towards the other end he enjoys more discrimination as to the goals which he selects. But in the long run those ends are dependent on their appeal to the basic appetites, and, similarly, the simplest form of gratification of appetite takes one outside the mere sphere of appetite and involves at least some rudimentary goal.

Three Levels of Action.

Conduct passes by infinite gradations from appetites to ends. We may, however, distinguish three levels of action which are crucial to the life of the growing child. These are the impulsive, the social and the purposive.

The young child acts mainly on the *impulsive* level, and adults lapse into this infantile phase whenever they are unable to tolerate any impediment to the immediate realization of their desires. That is, impulsive action is the shortest possible distance between appetite and end. As such behavior is apt to be spasmodic and occasional, seldom appearing in pure unmodified form, and as education is largely a matter of setting up an obstacle race for impulse, we need not linger over this phase of experience.

Social conditioning early sets to work to modify the crudeness of original impulse. The young child reacts in terms of his hungers, fears, approach impulses, but social incentives and restraints are early introduced to modify these first untutored reactions. The infant learns to be hungry at the time when the adult in charge elects to give him food. As he grows older he finds that the relief of his eliminative needs must be sought at definite times and only in certain places. He probably learns also that for some reason unknown to him, he may publicly proclaim his hunger, but must be more reticent in regard to evacuation. Other social conditionings take place, largely in terms of the social milieu in which he happens to be born. If he is fortunate enough to be born in a good home he becomes, let us hope, tidy, good-mannered, truthful, industrious, and so on. If he is less fortunate in his environment he may be taught to deceive, to steal, to slip out of work whenever possible. In the preceding chapters we have discussed at length the ways in which such social conditioning takes place; but our interest has now shifted to the other side of the picture and we are trying to see how social pressure motivates the child who experiences it. A detailed discussion of the values of social motivation will be reserved till the next chapter.

We wish here to point out that social motivation occupies an intermediate position in our scale. It removes the child from the crude low level of impulsive motivation, but it is arbitrary in the sense that the ends towards which his conduct is directed are supplied by others. Cleanliness is in few cases an end with the small boy; it is an end for his mother, and she imposes it upon him because it is part of the social code. Learning to conform to what is accepted by those among whom we live is a necessary stage in the evolution of the individual. It may, indeed, be the prelude which makes rebellions. Rebellion is, however, less to be feared than those cases of arrested development in which people never advance beyond the phase of social conformity. In the child this expresses itself in dependence on an adult,—the "What shall I do next?" attitude. In adults it may take the form of undue deference for those around us, as by "What will the neighbors think?" about any projected action. Dependence of this sort means that we have never found acceptable ends towards which our actions may be directed but are going through life on the borrowed morals of our friends.*

Many people never pass this stage of social dependency, which probably presents as great a problem for mental health as economic dependency does in the body politic. It is only when the third or *purposive* level of action is reached that we attain psychological adulthood. This third stage involves choosing our own ends and restraining and directing impulse in order to attain the ends that we have chosen. This does not mean that we are no longer amenable to social controls, but rather that the ends with which we have chosen to identify ourselves are our own ends, not those supplied by another. Our end may be the saving of society, but it is chosen because *we* want it, not because some one else has set it up for us.

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* See McDougall, William, *Social Psychology,* p. 175, for a discussion of the type of character formed on social motivation.

How We Integrate Our Personalities.

It is necessary that youth should experiment with goals in order to find those which are most satisfying. The preschool child is indifferently interested in blocks and in sand, in trains and in tricycles; it is unusual for any one interest to preëmpt the field. The school child may devote himself to collecting movie stars for one month and to organizing secret societies the next. With the adolescent, swimming, school success, and courtship may be competing goals. Normal development should show a decreasing number of objects of choice and an increasing congruity among those with which the person identifies himself. This process cannot, however, be hurried; it is entirely natural for the adolescent to be still in the experimental stage—even in college young people may change their courses with favorable results if they discover that the line they have chosen does not chime with their real inclinations.

In adult life changes may still happen to advantage in certain cases, though as Hadfield points out,* the adult who enthusiastically identifies himself first with one cause and then with another is giving evidence of arrested development on the adolescent plane rather than of having earned his full status of manhood. Choice means elimination as well as selection, and the effective adult is usually the one who can make clear-cut decisions as to what he will identify himself with and what ignore. Present trends in American life where people confessedly do "all or nothing"—and mostly all—usually lead to the frittering of action in a multiplicity of causes all perfectly good in themselves but so engrossing that the person who tries to compass all does nothing effectively. This represents an adolescent adjustment to life. Adults should have passed the sampling stage. It is surely as reprehensible for them to fail to discriminate among ends as it is for them to discourage trial and experiment in the young. In the adult scale of values wisdom lies not only in acceptance but equally in refusal.

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* Hadfield, J. A., *Psychology and Morals,* Methuen and Company, 1923, p. 116.

We thus envisage a hierarchy, or ascending scale of purpose, by which we progress from the vagrant interest of the child through the experiments and enthusiasms of youth to a settled identification of ourselves with certain ends or purposes. Such a scale of purpose, with the direction of our activities towards their realization, is what we understand by the integration of personality. This phrase is so often and so loosely used as a magic word that it seems well to be clear what we mean by it. No one can integrate our personalities for us, neither can a course of lectures, a new system of diet, or a new religion turn the trick. Only the steady, persistent application of our energies towards some goal which we accept as of worth can bring about such a unifying and coördinating of the scattered fragments of our experience.

Even then it is a long, painful process, and many people would rather go with their personalities at loose ends than pay the price of integration. This is all right so long as they realize that the product cannot be had without paying the cost. One hears much talk nowadays of self-expression, and a corresponding repudiation of the idea of repression. It is a mistake to think of these two as separate or antagonistic. There is a voluntary type of repression which belongs to the purposive level of behavior and is the necessary condition of self-expression. When young people talk about the right of self-realization they should be encouraged, provided they realize that self-realization is not indulgence to do as one likes, but rather the forging of a self through a process of rigid discipline.

Goals for Parents.

Miss Johnson remarks that "we cannot expect a child to be a clever parrot and a dynamic personality." * Parents may adopt newer methods of education only to discover how embarrassing a dynamic personality may be when they have produced one. On the other hand, confusion as to methods of management arises when parents are not clear in their own minds as to what they are trying to do. At a recent conference on problems of family management various topics were canvassed—How much time should a mother spend with her children? How much time should she have for herself? What part should the father take in the care and training of the children? How late should adolescents be allowed to stay out at night? and so on. Opinions were bandied back and forth like a game of battledore and shuttlecock with no conclusions reached. Finally an observer who up to this point had made no comments, remarked that all such questions were insoluble till people could define for themselves a *philosophy of parenthood.* In other words, specific questions could only be settled in relation to the ends which parents were trying to achieve.

The validity of this criticism was admitted, but no attempt was made to formulate goals for parents. One notes, indeed, unreadiness even with leaders in parent education to commit themselves in this respect. Yet goals we all have, whether explicit or implicit. The formulation of these goals may serve as a regulative principle in directing our actions.

What Kind of Children Do We Want?

A "dynamic personality" sounds explosive and dangerous. Our simpler formulation is that we want our children to be self-reliant, able to direct and enjoy their experience in ways that are satisfying to themselves and of value to the community. In other words, the goal of parenthood is to help children to find goals. This sounds like the young man at Mrs. Jellaby's party whose mission was to be in love with every one else's mission, but it is redeemed from insipidity by the difficulties of practice.

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* Johnson, Harriet, *Children in the Nursery School,* p. 40.

What Motives Govern Parents?

Probably recent thinking has overemphasized the naïve egotism of parents, the desire to augment one's personality through control of another, to project one's own limited experience through the range of the child's life. The reaction against parental egotism and selfishness has carried us to the opposite extreme, so that to-day we are almost ashamed to confess that we love our children—though fortunately we go on loving them all the same. By belittling or ignoring the bond of affection between parent and child we are discounting one of the strongest of forces for motivating parents, which should be turned in all its strength towards securing the right goals for our children. It is timely to remind ourselves that love may tie a boy to his mother's apron strings, but that it may also bid him Godspeed to the ends of the earth. Love becomes a shackle if it puts constraint on the child, whereas it reënforces and enriches his experience when it is freely given. Many parents do not love their children enough to damage them by their love. We should lose our fear of appeal to the parent's emotional attitudes, and instead use every resource which we can legitimately command to arouse a feeling so deep and strong that it will sustain parents in the demanding duties of parenthood. To help children to find goals, and then to stand aside while they realize them, will call for all the spiritual resources which we can command.

One last point: How do we know that independence or action directed towards a chosen goal is desirable for children? Only if we have found it so for ourselves. If in our own experience the focusing of our powers on the realization of some purpose has satisfied a deep-seated need of our nature, then we can be safe in assuming that what is good for us is likewise good for our children.

OUTLINE X

LEVELS OF ACTION

I. Control versus Motivation:
  Regulation from without—Control,
    —is secondary,
    —is likely to arouse resistance.
  Direction from within—Motivation,
    —depends upon original impulse,
    —realizes itself in ends and goals.

II. The Choice of Goals:
  A goal should be
    —the child's own choice,
    —just beyond his present attainment,
    —anticipated by a plan,
    —realized through freedom.

III. Progress Involves:
  Changing Goals,
  Changing Means by which Goals are realized,
  A lengthening span between impulse and goal.

IV. Three Levels of Action:
  Impulsive,
  Social,
  Purposive.

V. References:
  McDougall—*Social Psychology,* Chapter VII.
  Blatz and Bott—*Parents and the Pre-School Child,* Chapter II, pp. 295-301.

VI. Questions:
  1. How may parents help children to discover their special interests and capacities?
  2. How can one help to develop in a child the power to wait?

ILLUSTRATIONS X

I. *Realizing Goals.*

"Our five-year-old lad wanted lumber to build a real boat, one large enough to ride in. He won't allow any one to help him but he is quite incapable of completing the task. He won't use the lumber for any other purpose and though he still keeps working he is getting discouraged."

"What would you do when they make bird houses and don't quite finish because they think they can make better ones? My boy makes ever so many which he has never finished. He is always going to make them over but he ends up by giving them to the younger children. He has a definite idea of what he wants but the result doesn't measure up to it."

'I like to see a child finish what he is doing. Billy wants to build most difficult designs with his Meccano which he can't possibly accomplish. His father usually helps him and they finish the thing together."

"But isn't it very difficult to teach young children? My child of two will shriek and bite his toys if he cannot manage them. I often help him. This morning he was trying to get a train over a book and the hind wheel stuck. I just showed him what to do and he stopped shrieking and was quite pleased with himself when he had overcome this difficulty."

"Children will sometimes go on working because they are not satisfied with the results themselves. George had a passion for making an aeroplane and would draw it free hand, cut it out and paste the parts together. He made about thirty before he was satisfied. He worked at this for about a month. Now he is making trains. He cannot get a train to suit him and I doubt if he ever will, for he cannot make the wheels go round."

II. *Concentrated Interest.*

"My problem is not to get my child to attend to what he is doing, but to get him to stop. He becomes so absorbed in his play that he cannot bear to leave it."

"My little girl is perfectly crazy to wash dishes. She is allowed to do her own which are unbreakable. She loves to slip them into the big dishpan, wash and dry them. She runs the carpet sweeper, dusts and washes clothes."

III. *Social Motivation.*

A Normal Dependence:

"I took the children to the doctor's office the other day. He was not in and I mentioned to the nurse that I would go to the bank while waiting for him. The children had been there before for inoculation and seemed quite at home, but on mention of my leaving, the little one began to cry and hang on to my skirts. Apparently to be left alone was the little more in the situation that she could not bear. I gave up all idea of leaving and reassured and comforted her. That was all that was needed; she went through the procedure without any fuss."

"My little girl is four and we usually go shopping together. She seldom makes a fuss on the occasions when I leave her at home as I explain that though I love to take her with me, there are times when I cannot. To-day, though I had talked to her, she was set on coming and I left her screaming. She would get over it in a little while and will be perfectly happy when I return. The child will rebel against circumstances sometimes. I fancy that she was rather right to-day, as I have been out more than usual this week and she felt that this was not fair."

Beginnings of a Fixation:

"One of my children used to scream every time I left him. On one occasion he tore down the street after me and was nearly run down by a car. I deliberately left him on repeated occasions till the habit of dependence was broken. To-day he is at home ill in bed, but he was perfectly willing that I should come out."

"My child fears only two things, fire and my leaving her. If she comes in from school and finds that I am not at home or that I am preparing to go out, she has a tantrum. Sometimes she even gets sick at her stomach. I have reasoned with her, been firm with her, and resorted to spanking. This made her sick so I had to give it up to a certain extent."

"At what age should a child be able to dress himself? I tried to teach my boy, who is nearly four, to button and unbutton his clothes. He says he can't and if I insist he cries. I suspect that he is excusing himself in order to have me do things for him. I don't want to treat him as a baby and I would like to teach him to be independent."

Training for Independence:

"I think if you start when they are very young letting them do things their own way and only when they make mistakes, tell them where the mistake was made and how to do better, then you can be sure the child will develop independence."

"My mother used to tell us, 'Now I think thus and so, but you must make up your mind for yourself.' And she really left us free to do it. When I was about fifteen, I was left in charge of the family for about three weeks. We are a missionary's family and have all been accustomed to being away at school and college and to managing our own affairs since early adolescence."

"I try to bring up my children in such a way that if anything happened to me they would be able to carry on as if I were there. I should like to feel that they could do without me."

IV. *Goals for Parents.*

A group decided, after discussion, that a fair formulation of what we should provide would be:

At Home:

1. Sense of assurance.
2. Standards of comparison.
3. Privacy.
4. Loyalty and confidence.
5. Coöperation in group activities.

Abroad:

1. Experience of other family standards.

2. Practice in social adjustment.
3. Experience in making decisions—opportunity for independence.
4. Contact with different personalities.
5. Self-knowledge.

CHAPTER XI

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS

THERE is already something archaic about the idea of rewards and punishments, even though, like obedience, they are one of the topics that first interest parents in a study group. It was in 1886 that Felix Adler began his crusade against corporal punishment;* his work and that of his followers has played no small part in the general movement wherein people are now coming to recognize that punishment as a disciplinary measure is really unnecessary and usually harmful. Rewards and punishments represent not so much enduring factors in the child's experience as a kind of control which has had the sanction of long usage and which parents have found seemingly quick and easy. Whenever we think in terms of getting the child to do what we want, rewards and punishments are at hand as ready tools for encouraging or checking action. When, however, we think in terms of the child's experience as a learning process, translating ourselves to his level of development, then we see these forms of control as largely foreign to genuine learning in the child. They function as an alien factor from without, not as a development from within; they stress the outward act to be accomplished, not the inward doing of it.

There are, too, more subtle forms of external motivation than those physical tangible ones usually called rewards and punishments which likewise fail to educate. We refer to those outward and visible signs of an unsympathetic attitude in the parent which may operate without overt action or even persist long after the accompanying act. "I never punish my child" may be the satisfied comment of a parent who, nevertheless, brings the social pressure of her approval and disapproval to bear on the child in a fashion even more damaging than its visible expression could be. A good spanking is far inferior to the exquisite suffering which a sensitive child feels if she is outcast from her mother's favor. It is necessary, therefore, to be quite clear in our thinking about social motivation.

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* Adler, Felix, "The Punishment of Children," reprinted from *Ethical Addresses,* Ethical Culture Society, New York, 1898.

Learning Through Natural Consequences.

In the preceding chapter, we have tried to show how the child is moved to action. The usual situation is when some impulse from within realizes itself in relation to some object from without, that is, when appetites find satisfaction in ends. Action in relation to physical objects is relatively simple and the consequences are calculable. That is, the child touches the stove and is burned; he reaches for food and satisfies his hunger, etc. Here his conduct can be described in terms of simple motor functions; rhythms of approach and withdrawal. He is attracted towards some objects and repelled from others. He *learns* the properties of physical objects through a process of experimentation in which the consequences are determined—in so far as they are not tempered by human interference—by the properties of physical objects, the laws of the natural world.

Social Approximations to Natural Consequences.

What happens when we superimpose social on physical controls in the learning process? The action of human beings differs from that of physical objects not in being less subject to law, but because the laws of human action are more complicated and far less easy to discover. The young child, indeed, adapts best to social controls when these approximate as closely as possible to the uniformities of nature, as we have stressed in regard to the establishment of a routine. If adults can learn to handle young children without emotional bias and with regularity and consistency, the child's adjustment is correspondingly easy—he learns quickly how his surroundings will behave in response to his actions. That young children do tend to behave on this natural level is seen in the tendency, noted by observers in the pre-school situation, for children to react to other people, especially to other children, *as though they were objects.* This is, of course, a relatively low stage of social development in the child who soon learns to calculate on the incalculable in the behavior of his companions.

The Variability of Social Controls.

While adult controls may for some purposes approximate with advantage to the consistency of physical processes in order to simplify the learning situation for the young child, it is clear that they possess certain advantages by reason of their greater variability. Life could hardly be perpetuated if human beings could only adapt themselves to infant needs as do sticks and stones, wind and weather. Life is more than a routine. Shelter and protection, care and training, or in one word, nurture, is a spiritual as well as a physical process and is only possible through this greater adaptability which human beings enjoy.

What then are the disadvantages of social control in the form of rewards and punishments? Social factors when they impinge into experience, not as objects do when related to impulse, but as secondary, incalculable motives grafted on to this appetite-object situation, introduce an alien, extrinsic element in motivation. To take a simple example. A two-year-old is determined to possess himself of a piece of candy which you do not wish him to have. You either remove the candy or remove the child; and in so doing, it is no more than as if a door had slammed in his face or the wind lifted the candy box out of his reach. But suppose that instead of thus dealing with the situation on this impartial level you say: "Leave the candy alone and I will take you for a nice walk," or "Leave that alone or I'll slap your hands," or "Mamma's good little boy, give her the candy"—or any other of the countless variants on the reward-punishment theme, then you introduce a whole set of new motives. The situation is made complex and bewildering for the child and legitimate social control appropriate for that age and circumstance is defeated.

It will be necessary to examine in more detail the way in which secondary motivation beclouds the issue for discipline, but before doing so let us first look further at the nature of learning, and particularly at some implications which the discipline of natural consequences has for learning through social control.

Four Conditions of Learning.

There are four conditions, which if fulfilled, tend to make learning rapid and easy. These may be applied, not only to natural consequences, but also to social consequences and especially to punishment, if we are to assess its value in hastening or hindering the learning process in the child.

Immediacy: If consequence follows directly on cause, it is easy for the child to make the association. Thus, if he bumps his head against the side of the crib, he will soon learn to associate the pain with the bumping. If he jabs himself with the scissors, he will soon know that scissors are sharp. Wherever such immediate association obtains, learning will be facilitated, other things being equal. It is easy to see the bearing of this in respect of punishment; it is not always possible to punish the child immediately on the committing of an offense, as we cannot always be with him to watch what he does or we may not always be free to act at once. But also in the discipline of natural consequences, the results are not always so conveniently associated in a time sense that their meaning is unmistakable. The child who eats too much at the party may not be sick till next day. She may not even be sick at all; she may merely have helped along a tendency to digestive disturbance which will only appear in later years. There are, however, countless cases in which the consequences of an act do follow with an immediacy which makes it a useful demonstration of cause and effect and where this applies, learning proceeds apace.

Inevitability: This is simply another way of saying that the same causes should always produce the same effects; that whenever I put my finger in the fire I will get burned. For the child, moving in a world whose physical properties he has not yet apprehended, it is of the greatest importance that this lesson should be learned early. It can be learned much more effectively from his contacts with physical objects than from social situations where results are conditioned, not by what we do in relation to the constant properties of the physical world, but by what we do in relation to other persons who are as subject to variations as ourselves. This should not be taken to mean that human action is less determined by law than is the performance of physical substances, but that the laws of our being are much more difficult to discover. Thus, I am angry one day and punish my child; the next day, I am feeling well and in good humor and I excuse him or express amusement upon the same offense. I am conditioned by my own full experience in both cases, but the results for the child have the confusing appearance of being wholly different outcomes. Whereas, if he knocks over a pile of blocks, they as inevitably fall to-day as yesterday.

Invariability: Another condition favorable to learning is not merely that the same sort of thing happens but that it happens in the same way, regularly. The nearer the identity of result, the more forcibly is awareness of the connection established. Thus spilling water on one's clothes does not wet them on one occasion and leave them unchanged the next; water always acts in the same way when we spill it. The reactions of adults to the child's spilling, however, will vary considerably. In one setting, he may get a spanking, in another, he will simply be told to get a mop and wipe the water up. One may try, and it is surely worth trying, to introduce into one's handling of children something of the same consistency that obtains in physical nature, though it cannot be more than an approximation.

Proportionality: By this is meant a nice gradation in amount between cause and effect. In a broad, speculative sense, of course, it may be held that every effect in the universe exactly balances the sum total of causal conditions that produce it, but in everyday practice, our thinking and acting is rather in terms of proximate relations and in this narrower practical sense what one accepts as cause may or may not be directly proportional to effect. In the physical world, however, proportionality can be recognized within limits, the colder the temperature, the lower the mercury—till it freezes; but in the complex biological realm, relations thus uniformly graded are farther to seek and still more so in the social sphere where circumstances so alter cases. Now physical as well as social values play a part in human experience so that in learning to guide our actions by the consequences they bring, all degrees of correlation between cause and effect will be met with. Thus the longer our finger is in the flame, the more will we be burned, whereas the child who leans from a window may suffer no mishap till he leans just a little farther and is killed. Motor accidents are not graded according to the nearness of the encounter, a hairbreadth of clearance is like a mile in its difference from disaster. The fact that we call these serious outcomes *accidents* shows how little real learning enters into them. Again, a spark of fire may produce no heat or a great conflagration just as a hot word may have no effect or raise a riot. Thus in the social world and even in the physical world value cannot be assigned to events unless their attendant conditions are taken into account and some principle of relationship is recognized.

When, therefore, we wish to consider a plan of child training based upon learning, wherein the consequences of acts are reasonably proportioned to deeds, how far is it possible to incorporate our customary kinds of rewards and punishments into such a scheme? The artificiality of trying to devise any fixed schedule of rewards or punishments which can be graded as the due consequences for given acts under all circumstances, will at once be apparent. And even if such a schedule were at hand, the emotional atmosphere attendant upon putting it into execution would inevitably alter its value. Social values, happily, are too flexible to be cast in any such rigid molds with any hope of letting "the punishment fit the crime." But without this proportionality learning is little advanced; in other words, rewards and punishments, in as much as they are not strictly apportioned to corresponding deeds, are to the child not consequences but simply accidents.

Such being in general the criteria of successful learning, it remains to examine various forms of social motivation to see how they relate to such conditions. Social motivation may express itself in the general attitudes of approval and disapproval, or the more specific forms of rewards and punishments. The former are fundamental and pervasive, the latter derive their cogency from the fact that they are expressions of approval and disapproval. In point of time, as McDougall points out, rewards and punishments come first; we progress from more gross and obvious to more subtle forms of motivation.* A spanking may cause an emotional upset in a small child, a look from a friend may disrupt an adult's life.

Rewards.

Rewards may be defined as pleasing consequences attached to an act to facilitate its repetition. If the act is inherently satisfying there is no need for a reward. The hungry child does not have to be motivated to eat his dinner by the promise of a candy at the end; it is only the child whose appetite has been perverted by wrong management who will require such an incentive. This illustration shows the fallacy in the use of rewards with children. They involve an attack on superficial symptoms rather than on underlying causes. Why not adjust the child's feeding habits in such a way that he will be hungry and therefore find satisfaction in every part of the meal, not simply in the thought of a candy at the end? The fact that the reward is always tacked on to a situation means that the situation itself is tolerated only for the sake of what comes after. Now, while life does offer situations of this sort, it is a mistake to reduce the whole value of experience by assessing it only in terms of future good. The boy who does arithmetic only for the sake of a prize, is losing the satisfaction he should be finding in the accomplishment of a really challenging task. It is, of course, often argued that the reward is a mere temporary expedient used to arouse interest in the situation; that the boy who at first does arithmetic for the sake of a prize will later come to do it for the love of the work itself. It would seem that at the best this postpones the desired result or at the worst might defeat it. Why should a teacher not spend her efforts in creating desirable work attitudes by the manner in which she presents her subject? Any one who has taken careful note of the far-fetched and elaborate schemes of motivation through competition, games, gold stars, etc., which are frequently used in school to get desired responses from children in relation to their work, must have felt that the same energy applied to more vital methods of teaching would accomplish greater results with fewer disadvantages. The child who gets what one might call the "reward habit" will continue to look not for intrinsic values but for the prizes which he can acquire, deflecting his course wherever he sees a chance of good pickings by the way. In so far as this may lead to a mean and paltry type of character, it is a heavy price to pay for a wrongly conceived type of early motivation.

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* *Social Psychology*, p. 156.

Rewards are temporary at best in their effects, as most parents know if they have tried five cents a week for hanging up clothes, stars for dry beds, and so on. Where motivation of this type works it is probable that it does so by reason of factors other than the reward itself. The child who brings his sheet of stars to the clinician is motivated by a just pride in his accomplishment, and by the desire to win the approval of the doctor. Judging from the experience of our own clinic, he will react as well to a written record of his successes as to any system of marks for merit. In regard to hanging up clothes, it is doubtful if any monetary reward is meaningful enough to a young child to overcome his resistance to a situation fundamentally uninteresting. It would seem that in a case of this sort, it is better for a mother to take the responsibility of seeing that the required act is done, if necessary by assisting with it.

It is not unimportant for mothers to realize that there are some parts of the child's experience which are not and cannot be intrinsically interesting till he reaches a certain stage of development. Until that point, there is nothing in the child's experience on which to graft the habit, and neither rewards nor punishments will accomplish our purpose. Take the trivial instance of unfolding a serviette before the beginning of a meal. Only when an active interest in the care of clothes and person is aroused will the child be motivated to do this. Constant remindings have absolutely no effect although repeated three times a day every day of the year. Rewards would be equally futile for the reason just mentioned that the natural elements of motivation are lacking. It is simpler to recognize this and to take other means of getting the required act done. Rewards will speed up performance for a short period but will soon be forgotten. Ask a mother how long she had kept paying a child for a given act, and you will find that the limit is generally within one month. This same amount of effort put into supervising the performance of the act would probably have accomplished as much and would give prospect of more, whereas if the child with rewards relapses to his old form of behavior, as often happens, it is only an indication that the natural motivation was lacking and that success was impossible on that basis.

Rewards, again, introduce the objectionable element of barter into the dealings of parent and child. If the child is offered a reward for being good, but prefers to be bad and go without the treat, what then will the parents do? The child is a good bargainer and may begin to raise his price for good behavior. Or else as the novelty of the reward wears off we shall have to increase the price to maintain the same degree of motivation. In every case the use of rewards beclouds the issue, distracting the attention of the child from the matter in hand to some element that is not part of the situation. This makes it more rather than less difficult for the child to understand why he should act as he should.

Special Treats.

There should, however, be a distinction drawn between a reward held out as an incentive to a child in a deliberate attempt to motivate him in a certain way, and a treat which is an afterthought in relation to a given experience. A case illustrating this was cited in a group meeting. A mother had taken her child to the dentist; he had hurt her considerably, but the child had been good and had made no fuss. After they left the dentist's the mother remarked that the child had behaved well, and suggested that they have lunch downtown together. They did so and had an unusually pleasant time. The party had been in no sense held out as an incentive, there had been no mention of it before the visit to the dentist. It represented rather a legitimate but tangible expression of the mother's approval of the child's conduct. In that case the mother was anxious to overcome the disagreeable memories which the child might retain of her hour in the dentist's chair, and she chose to do it by tying up the situation which was somewhat unpleasant in itself with a further experience which was distinctly pleasant.

Life is always enriched by just such unexpected and gratuitous elements of pleasure. We respond as adults to the chance meeting with a friend, the opportunity for an unlooked-for visit or holiday, all the pleasant interruptions which lend zest and color to the routine. It may well be our function as parents to see that there is such an infusion of unexpected pleasure, the "surprise" element in the experience of our children which Porter Lee has denoted under the general term of "festival." Such breaks provide the needed relief from the monotony of the daily routine and at the same time afford opportunity for companionship of parent and child on a pleasure basis rather than on an utility basis as is so often the case. Why not let such treats be purely free gifts, something we do for children because we enjoy them and take pleasure in sharing our enjoyment with the child? They should be the expression of our spontaneous pleasure in the child's companionship, given freely without conditions of good behavior tied to them.

Punishments.

When we turn from positive to negative types of artificial motivation we find in punishment the great instrument which parents resort to in trying to deal with problems of discipline. It is interesting, when one watches a situation such as the nursery school where children are readily managed without recourse to physical punishment and with a minimum of restraint of any description, to speculate upon why the other mode should be so prevailing. Why are parents preoccupied with questions of punishment? The answer lies partly in the acceptance of traditional methods of management, partly in lack of inventiveness in respect of social situations. Punishment seems an easy, obvious way of securing social conformity, moreover, it is one which has been widely accepted in the past. This is so much the case that parents may feel a strong impulsion to punish their children quite apart from any specific offense, as though it were a duty they owed their children on principle. We need not refer such an impulse to any sadistic tendency, or feeling of pleasure in the inflicting of physical suffering on another; it may be merely an expression of the anxiety of the adult to fulfill her parental responsibilities. She feels that not to punish may indicate lax and indulgent attitudes in herself, a willingness to put her own inclination in place of the good of the child.

But such attitudes are changing, and parents are less sure of their ground than they were a generation ago. Consequently punishment is the subject which parents want to discuss first in a study course. It has seemed impossible to get a proper perspective in regard to punishment until one could convey to parents some idea of a whole constructive plan of discipline. Such an idea of discipline as the training of the young child in a good routine of bodily habits we try to lay down in an introductory course of study with parents. Our view is that when this central conception of discipline as inherent in a good routine is grasped, the question of punishment will fall into place, not as a central theme of a program of child training, but as a more or less outworn and quite unnecessary method of securing social conformity.

It is necessary again and again to revert to the idea of the learning process as central for the training of children in order to be able to discuss punishment fairly. Its advantages or disadvantages must be weighed in relation to what it contributes, immediately and ultimately, to effective learning.

If we define punishment as disagreeable consequences attached to an act in order to discourage its repetition, we must first ask ourselves whether this negative method of checking behavior is an efficient procedure. In contrast with rewards, which at least are positive, punishment looks like a very poor method of attacking problems of discipline. It is true that there are certain forms of behavior in the child which we wish to discourage, but it should be clear from former discussions that merely to block impulse is a form of correction that does not conduce to adaptive behavior. At best we are simply damming the child's activity instead of redirecting it into constructive channels. However one may like to rationalize, the fact remains that punishment is always of this negative sort, and this is one of its most serious disadvantages. In addition it is a technique that seems deliberately to violate those principles we discussed which assist in learning. That is to say, if one carefully reviews the details and circumstances of punishments as administered over a period of months in a home or school where this custom prevails, one will find that instead of being immediate, inevitable, invariable and proportional to the deeds in question they are rather the contrary. We conclude that the spirit of punishment does not plumb with any systematic policy of training based on learning, and that no amount of rationalization can bring it into line.

The Results of Punishment.

In discussing the results of punishment we are dealing more specifically with those attending corporal punishment since these present in extreme form the effects of most types of punishment. After these have been reviewed, it may be possible to decide whether there are any forms of punishment which are really effective in modifying the child's behavior in ways that are desirable.

Punishment may hasten performance: Animal experimentation would indicate that maze running with rats, for example, is speeded up when punishment is introduced. But this should not be transferred to the human situation as though the two were identical. The electric shock which discourages the rat from exploring a blind alley in a maze is in the nature of a physical consequence, rather than a social deterrent. The situation is not complicated with the interaction of social factors as it is when a parent is engaged in punishing a child. Even so, it is doubtful if learning is really furthered when we regard the whole situation and not merely the immediate response. For punishment, in mice or men, may check the exploratory impulse, may tend to restrict action, and not merely that one form of behavior which we are concerned to eliminate. We may accomplish too much by our punishment and inhibit really desirable forms of activity.

Punishment clouds the issue by introducing emotional factors: This is probably the most serious indictment that can be made against punishment. A child is told to come in from play at a certain time. He refuses to come, we bring him in and whip him. Our hope is that the child will remember the occasion by reason of the punishment, that every time he is tempted to linger at his play he will say to himself, "Got a spanking last time," and come in, spurred to prompt action by the memory of this unpleasantness. But can we be sure that the disagreeable association will stop just where we wish it to, that it will limit itself to just this one aspect of the situation, and not spread to others? May not the child's attitude of withdrawal, of avoidance, be set up in relation to the person who has punished him rather than to the circumstance in question? An attitude of avoidance, of dislike towards the parent who punishes, is almost bound to develop. This will mean that it becomes harder and harder for that person to lead the child into those forms of behavior which are desirable; force becomes the only recourse, and force begets force in return.

Parents should reckon with the emotional disturbance they set up in themselves as well as in their children when they punish. Righteous indignation is rare; what more probably we feel is a pleasure in retaliating on the child for the annoyance he has caused us, or for his defiance of our authority. Anger is an ugly thing when directed towards a child, but even genuine anger is better than the pious fiction, "It hurts me more than it does you." Anger the child can meet with anger; against cant and sentimentality he has no weapons. If by "hurts" we mean damages, the saying is probably true, as habitually to punish children cannot but have a degrading effect on the person who metes out the punishment. In addition it destroys the respect for the child which we posited as one of the essentials of a good relation between child and parent. Needless to say, it also destroys the child's respect for the parent. There is an element of humiliation in corporal punishment which is only too apt to reap a harvest of resentment in the attitude towards the parent who administers it.

Punishment is alien to a consistent discipline: It is impossible to be consistent in the administration of corporal punishment. We cannot punish every offense, for the infringement of a rule may escape our knowledge. We ourselves are so variable in our moods that what offends us one day may meet with leniency the next. We cannot always make the punishment fit the crime, for we have no nice way of grading penalties, of knowing how to measure the child's action, for instance, in relation to his intention, or of comparing one type of badness with another. How can we be sure that the young child will see the connection between his act of offense and our act of punishment in a way that will contribute to learning as do natural consequences? In short, on all four counts of immediacy, inevitability, invariability and proportionality, we shall have to discount punishment as an effective aid to learning. Exactly the same objections hold against rewards except that they are positive and that the emotional accompaniments are less objectionable. Both are imported from outside into the learning situation, and so have not that congruity with the child's experience which growth in personality requires.

If we disregard punishment in child training we should be perfectly clear *why* we are doing so, for it is possible to become as fanatical against this practice as for it. A mother from one of our groups, coming to the consultation clinic, was asked if she used punishment and replied promptly, "Not since the second lecture." We suspect that there are persons who get the idea that punishment is one of those things that just aren't done, but that they have no very clear reason for the faith that is in them. We wish to be quite emphatic that if punishment is discarded it should be on rational, not on sentimental, grounds. It must be because of the conviction that it is alien to effective learning and so hinders our purpose, not because we feel sorry for the child, or wish to be thought modern in our views. Moreover, if our conviction means a change in practice it is important to be clear on the rationale and form of the technique that we are substituting.

Praise and Blame.

The less tangible forms of social motivation call for brief comment. In an article entitled, "The 'Catch' in Praise," * Miss Jessie Taft has summed up in masterly fashion the case against the use of praise and blame, on which we frequently fall back when we attempt to discard punishments. She points out that the fundamental fallacy lies in the confusion of purpose which they introduce. The child works for the approval of her family rather than for the sake of good performance in her work. Both are likely to be lost if anxiety and a divided mind disturb the issue, or, another outcome, if a child whose passion for results outruns discretion creates a fabric of falsehood in order to satisfy the ambitions of her family.

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* Taft, Jessie, "The 'Catch' in Praise," *Child Study*, Feb. 1930.

There may be cases in which the child frankly admits that he cares nothing for a given task, and that he is doing it only for the kudos that it will bring. A boy may be bored by football, but still work for a place on the team rather than be left out of things by the other boys. There is no objection to working for social approval provided we do not try to fool ourselves as to what we are doing. To give money to a good cause in order to better our social position may not be a very lofty kind of motivation, but it will do comparatively little harm from a mental hygiene point of view provided we admit *why* we are doing this. To try to train the child to work ostensibly for one purpose while we are constraining him by another is to undermine the foundations of character.

We have already discussed the sensitivity of children to adult attitudes and the kind of relationship with adults which should make for good social adjustment. The dangers of exploiting the child's dependence should always be remembered. We do not want our children to be moral weathercocks, responding to every change in the social atmosphere. We wish them to rely, not so much on outside influence as on strong inner impulsion towards goals of their own choosing. The socially pliable person presents a pleasing but scarcely a rugged type of character.

By reason of his lack of experience the child is often at the mercy of the opinions of others. He has not had opportunity to try his powers or to form a just estimate of his own capacities. He usually takes at their face value the opinions of parents and teachers. He may get the idea that he is unusually clever, interesting, amusing, or, on the other hand, that he is troublesome, wayward, dull. To be always praised leads to over-confidence and to an objectionable form of self-assertion. This is almost as bad as the habitual disparagement of the child to which we referred in an earlier chapter.

Again, a child may be protected from the consequences of his acts by the interposition of adults in the situation. The child who is always being helped, shielded, excused, does not develop stamina to meet difficulties. On the other hand, the child who is persistently disparaged is apt to become so discouraged that he makes no attack on undertakings for which he is by natural equipment quite competent. Of these two the latter is the more serious state. Approval which encourages effort can do little harm, for the natural correctives of over-confidence lie in the result of the action. But to disparage a child, to make him feel that he is inferior, incapable of attainment, is to do him injury for which there is no compensation. Mental health depends on the full functioning of those powers which we possess; without such functioning there cannot be real contentment. Yet few people actually live anywhere within reach of their best. Every influence that discourages children from effort tends to the lowering of psychic tone, with resulting loss of satisfaction to the child and of enrichment to society. In so far then as we rely on social motivation, we should use approval in preference to disapproval. The latter when used should be only in reference to some specific fault of conduct. This should be made clear and then left, without being harked back to again and again. Above all things, a fault-finding attitude to the child's behavior should be avoided.

Child-centered or Adult-centered?

Is there then no legitimate place for the expression of adult attitudes towards the child's behavior? Most emphatically, yes, but what is needed is *constructive criticism* rather than praise or blame. The difference may seem a nice one, but, again, it depends on the adult's orientation to the child. It may be remembered that in an earlier chapter we said that there were two questions which an adult responsible for the training of children might ask himself: "How shall I get the child to do what I want?" or, "How shall I direct and train the child so that he will come to accept full responsibility for his own behavior?" Praise and blame belong with the first question, that is they are expressions of an adult-centered way of thinking. They reflect the moods of the adult rather than the needs of the child. Constructive criticism, on the contrary, is child-centered; it is an attempt to understand any moot question from the child's point of view and to help the child to understand better what is involved, and so to guide his action more effectively. It does not introduce the confusion of conflicting goals of action. The child's goal is still accepted, but the adult applies his greater resources and experience towards helping the child to realize it.

The very inexperience of children puts them at the mercy of more sophisticated people; this means that they need suggestion and guidance, which, indeed, they will accept gladly if it is given in a detached, impartial fashion. We know ourselves inadequately, hence we fail to capitalize our nascent powers, and we blunder for lack of a little guidance. Where advice is directed to an unbiased sizing up of a situation and an honest attempt to plan what is best to be done, it seldom meets resistance, even though adverse criticism may be involved. The readiness with which parents and children respond to judicious clinical advice demonstrates this. Children as well as adults welcome having a question taken out of the heat of controversy and dealt with dispassionately according to the principles involved, and not according to personal feelings. Such constructive criticism is a valid aid to self-knowledge. It facilitates learning and clarifies purpose.

If in our judgment the child has done well, not to tell him so would be to neglect a powerful incentive to further achievement. We all know how tremendously we are encouraged by honest commendation. Our point is that it must be *real* praise, a genuine recognition of work well done, not a handing out of conventional compliments. If we cannot commend in this fashion it is better to be silent. Most of us will agree, when we recall our early experience, that praise meant most to us when it came from those who were somewhat sparing in its use—so that the stamp of genuineness was unquestionable. Such commendation registers achievement; it does not design to stimulate it.

Practice and Theory.

A practical point of some importance remains to be raised before we leave the subject of rewards and punishments. A parent may be honestly convinced that these methods are undesirable, but she may find that they "work" in some situations, and she may be at a loss to know how to carry on without these supports to her authority. What, then, should she do? The following extract, taken from a recent text on industrial psychology,* bears directly on this point, and is all the more significant as offering confirmatory evidence from a field of human relations other than our own:

> ". . . Neither fear nor a bonus provides a lasting stimulus, especially where other causes of deficient output remain unremedied. In by far the majority of cases, slackness is due to bad management, and is therefore to be radically cured not by introducing even an appropriate incentive, but by removing the features of that bad management—by dismissing inefficient, uncongenial overseers, by abolishing waiting for material and other causes of unproductive time, by instructing workers in the best methods of work. Merely to induce in them an anxiety or to offer a bonus, is much the same method as an ignorant driver might employ in attempting to improve an animal's pace by hitting him with a whip or by holding a carrot before his nose."

Translate this into the practice of the home, and it means that an adjustment of the social and physical conditions with which we surround our children is the one effective means of control. This calls for study, inventiveness and experiment on the part of those responsible. To think that this can be achieved quickly is to miss the point of what parent *education* means.

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* Myers, C. S., Ed., *Industrial Psychology,* Home University Library, 1929, p. 11.

OUTLINE XI

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS

I. Social Motivation:
  Reward and Punishments.
  Approval and Disapproval.

II. Learning through Natural Consequences:
  Immediacy.
  Inevitability.
  Invariability.
  Proportionality.

III. Rewards and Punishments:
  They are extrinsic to the child's goal.
  They confuse the learning situation.

IV. Approval and Disapproval:
  They abuse the natural suggestibility of children.
  They tend to impose adult values on the child's experience.

V. Constructive Criticism:
  It is child-centered and not adult-centered.
  It offers guidance without emotional bias.

VI. References:
  Miller, Marion—Rewards and Punishments. *Studies in Child Training.*
  Taft, Jessie—The "Catch" in Praise, *Child Study,* February. 1930.

VII. Questions:
  1. Can you recall any conspicuous punishment which you received as a child? What was your reaction to it?
  2. How may one get conformity to the routine without the use of rewards or punishments?

ILLUSTRATIONS XI

I. *Rewards.*

Successful:

"I have two boys who are slow undressing, so I give a star to the one who is undressed first. Sometimes the younger wins, sometimes the older. I have done this only for short periods. I tried it first last spring, and after a few weeks they had got into the habit of undressing quickly and then we stopped. This fall they asked me to do it again."

"I tried giving stars for efficiency in some one thing. When it was accomplished we would turn to another. One thing was to see who would come first when called to a meal. At the end of a week the child who won was allowed to choose some item for the Sunday dinner."

"I have found that paying my little girl of five one cent a day for hanging up her clothes and keeping her room tidy worked very well. I have done this for a few weeks, and she now takes real pride in her neatness. I suppose that there is a certain amount of social approval involved."

"I have tried rewards and they have helped in some of my problems. I have a boy of seven and a girl of ten who sometimes quarrel. I offer them a treat at the end of the week if they will try not to quarrel. They really do try to check themselves. In time they may even enjoy one another's company."

Ineffective:

"My boy of twelve sucks his fingers and bites his nails. I tried rewarding him, so much a finger, but it had absolutely no effect."

"I have offered my boy as high as twenty-five cents a finger if he would stop biting his nails, but though he loves money it had no effect."

"What about the child who says, 'I don't care' about a reward? I say, 'If you go to bed quickly every night you can go to the Zoo on Saturday.' The next night she dawdles and I remind her. She keeps on dawdling and says, 'I don't care!' "

"It does not work after the novelty of the reward wears off. If you offer a lollipop, and he has one every few days for being good, the child soon gets tired of lollipops and thinks that he might as well do as he pleases."

"I have trouble with my child not wanting to go to the bathroom. I bribe him by letting him play with his father after tea. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. It seems to depend on his mood."

"I started giving my young daughter ten cents a week for picking up her nightgown in the morning. In a week or two she said she didn't care whether she got it or not. Then I made her do it without a reward."

"If my child is dry in the morning she can have honey on her toast. It works occasionally."

"I use money. I give my boys, five and seven, ten cents a week for tidiness, with a cent off for every day untidy. It did not work consistently two years ago, but I haven't had to take off for one and a half years. It works. It gives incentive. I would say, 'Room not tidy this morning, one cent off.' "

"If the child is dry during the morning I promise a sweet with dinner, if in the afternoon with supper. It works for about three weeks at a stretch, then there will be a slip. This is not due to accident, but to carelessness. The reward brings good results again, but I am not entirely satisfied with it. Sometimes she shouldn't have candy anyway. But it gives an incentive and is a good talking point."

First Parent: "What would you do with a child of four who simply won't come in when called to lunch?"

Second Parent: "I say, 'I won't call you again. If you don't come in you can't play on the bicycle to-morrow.' Or else I deprive them of their dessert. I always do one or the other. I have three boys, two, four and six."

II. *Children's Reaction to Corporal Punishment.*

Resentment and Retaliation:

"I had good results in obtaining obedience by spanking until about a month ago, when my daughter started spanking me. I decided to stop."

"When I raise my hand to my son to slap him he raises his hand to me. I do not want that habit to develop, so I have stopped."

"With some children spanking will not work. I had my boy's father spank him for something and he said, 'Daddy spanked me, he hit me; he is a naughty man.' I supported his father, but the child continued to show real resentment."

"I found that spanking caused resentment. The other night my husband whipped our little boy. He is two years and four months old, and he slapped back at his father, saying, 'Bad daddy to slap Ross.' "

Disposition Improved:

"My daughter is more affectionate and devoted after being spanked. If the child will not obey you have to punish. If I tell my child to do something and she just fools, in eating her meals for instance, what can one do but punish?"

"My child went away, against orders, to a corn roast, taking his little sister two months old in the carriage with him. He came home at eight o'clock, having had a wonderful time. He had deceived the housemaid as to where he was going. He was whipped and his allowance cut off. He has been an angel ever since."

A Short Cut to Discipline:

"I know that punishment deters. I am old-fashioned. I slap my child's hands. A slap does throw cold water on a child's temper. I do not get angry, of course. I just go up to the nursery and say: 'Are you crying for me to come and slap you?' Usually that works, but if it doesn't the slap does."

"I whip very little, but when it comes to a crisis it is the only thing that will do any good. My boy does not need to be spanked, but my little girl works herself up for a good spanking. I never do it in a temper; I do it with a wooden spoon. The very sight of that spoon is all that is necessary sometimes."

"The times I have been successful are for those things where I have punished every time the thing happened, and it comes to mind that it is the consistency that counts."

"What arguments other than slapping on the hands can you use with a child between one and two years, a very vigorous child who persists in standing up when you are trying to dress him? No amount of force will hold him there. One sharp slap will make him lie still, but screaming. It is very difficult to make a child of this age understand by talking. I become not only exhausted but perfectly furious."

III. *Adult Memories of Punishments in Childhood.*

"When I was twelve years old I came home late one day to dinner. We were coming home from the park in charge of a maid, and I stopped on the way for a perfectly legitimate reason. The maid went on ahead and reported that I had stopped willfully. That, I regret to say, had been my habit. When I came home late to dinner I was sent upstairs and my mother spanked me. I thought I was much too old for such punishment and also that I should have been given a hearing. I always felt resentful about that."

"I can remember one punishment which I recalled with embarrassment for a long time. I was told to watch the horse in a back yard, and instead of watching it I got bored and went into a neighbor's house. The horse broke into a beautiful garden next to ours and trampled it. There was no punishment too great for me then. My father rarely punished when he was angry; he would look for a strap, leaving us lying across a chair. In the meantime he would cool off and we seldom received the punishment. Instead, he would give us a talking to, and the humiliation of lying there with the rest of the family looking on was punishment enough. This time he did give me the whipping without waiting to cool off. I did not speak to him for days. I am sure that he was sorry for having punished me in that way. He brought me some of our best apples for a treat but I would not take them and would not speak to him. I felt that I deserved punishment, but not in that humiliating way, for I was about eleven and had not been whipped for years. It was terrible, and for years afterwards I still remembered and resented it."

IV. *Praise and Blame as Incentives.*

"I have said this—'I suppose Mother will have to do it for you, but I am very much ashamed and disappointed in you.' Sometimes she responds to this, but I am wondering about the effect which it has on her."

"One of my children responds to praise; the other prefers candy. Sometimes praise does not work, but nothing always works. Sometimes she has a superiority complex over the other child."

"Praise is very effective with one of my children, so effective that I wonder if it is right to keep on using it. It is dangerous to build up such a feeling in the personality. It is to a certain extent unnatural. It would be better for her to get the satisfaction that comes from the thing itself. It teaches a child to lean on public opinion in a way that is not helpful later in life."

"Sometimes praise will cause a child to get to the end desired no matter how. One of our children was praised for getting perfect work at school. Later we found that she had been copying to keep up her standing."

"My mother used to scold me. She had no idea that I regularly started on a campaign of starvation, thinking that I would put an end to myself. By the second meal I was usually so hungry that I overcame my tendencies to suicide. I was, however, absolutely miserable. I was never spanked, but these scoldings made me feel like a worm. I never wanted to repeat the offense."

CASE XI

JACK. Age 5/0. I.Q. 100.

Problem as stated by mother.

"Very disobedient—will not come when called—is beginning to lie. Cannot understand why he lies because we never whip him."

History:

Family Life:
Father: Aged 48—principal of public school in small town.
Mother: Aged 46—school teacher before marriage.
* Siblings: Three older siblings—brother 14—sister 11—brother 9.
Other persons in home: None.
Obstetrical History: Nothing unusual.
Developmental History: Nothing unusual.
Attitudes: Nothing unusual.
Motor: Early.
* Speech: Early—no difficulty except for the use of vulgar and profane expressions. (See below under discipline.)
Eating: No difficulty.
* Elimination—Bladder: No difficulty.
—* Bowel: Occasional soiling which the mother states is "deliberate."
* Sleeping: Regular bed time—adequate sleep—long-drawn-out preparations for bed—dawdling and quarreling with other brothers—dawdling in the morning.
* Play: Adequate companionship,—inclined to tattle.
Sex: No difficulty.
* Emotions: Fears—Has no fears, on the contrary is very "brave."
Anger—Sulks on reproof.
* Self-tendencies: Cries easily, tattles, lies.
* Discipline: Method of discipline in this home is one of the

most interesting that has come to the notice of this clinic. There is no corporal punishment, there is no disagreement between the parents and no interfering from other persons in the home and a fairly regular and consistent routine is observed—but—the children are put on an allowance, the youngest 25c.—for every misdemeanor 1c. is deducted from the allowance, e.g.—late at breakfast, use of profanity, dirty hands at table, rudeness, lying, quarreling, etc., etc.

Diagnosis.

It is not difficult to see the origin of this child's behavior—the youngest in the family—the use of profanity—the soiling (which in his case drew a special levy)—the tattling and dawdling. It is interesting to ask why the other children did not rebel. Inquiry showed similar incipient episodes in the other children but the arrival of the younger sister or brothers provided a period of respite not granted to the youngest. One can observe a little priggishness in the older children which may be significant.

Recommendation.

A full discussion of the principles enunciated in the preceding chapter failed to convince the parents that their system might lead to difficulties. It was suggested that the allowances given to the children be made stable and independent of their behavior, which should have other and more reasonable consequences. They suggested that they might try this plan with the youngest but leave the older three children as before. This was objected to because of the possibilities of jealousy and discrimination. The parents decided to talk the matter over.

Results.

The parents did not return to the clinic and did not answer a letter of inquiry.

CHAPTER XII

SUCCESS AND FAILURE

THE foregoing chapters have dealt with principles of management from the standpoint of both child and parent. The child's ever-present activities from within, the parent's control from without, with its progressive diminishing of restraint and increasing of opportunities for self-control, have been sketched as the outline of a scheme of discipline. Finally we come to the crucial test: On what basis is a plan of discipline to be evaluated? Our answer would be that the criterion cannot be from outside the discipline but must lie in its very working. If a scheme of discipline takes into account the basic forces, biological and psychological, which enter into life, if it operates to realize the fullest scope possible for these at each successive stage in development, and if it endeavors to do so not merely on behalf of the child but of all those persons associated with him, then the discipline will be the most potent means we know of promoting mental health. This brings us to a final issue in the instituting of such a discipline. We have argued that the basic forces move from within the child but require to be directed. What type of motivation, then, is in the last analysis most effective in controlling this process? We are convinced that the individual's sense of success and failure is in the long run the most influential factor in the determining of personality. It remains to examine this thesis and its import.

The Integration of Action by the Self.

All action conforms to one or other of the two basic motor attitudes of approach and withdrawal; that is, the organism in its movements tends either to advance and enter into relations with some selected part of its environment, or else to retreat and repudiate it. As experience develops the individual tends more and more to express himself in terms of the objects in his environment towards which he has developed set habits of acceptance or rejection. He likes certain things and dislikes others, and out of these likes and dislikes personality is largely built. Following McDougall,* we would use the somewhat clumsy term "self-feelings," positive and negative, to express this enlargement of the self into a personality which encompasses and integrates its world. By this we mean that the personality of the individual is determined by the ways in which he habitually reacts to the world of persons and of things around him. These self-tendencies are the equivalents in experience of the individual's motor attitudes viewed as behavior. What externally is described as approach involves, from the point of view of experience, a sense of confidence, of assurance, of mastery in respect of people and circumstance. Similarly withdrawal has its inner counterpart in the feeling of submission, of inadequacy, of inferiority to those around us.

Our inner impulses generate action in respect of our environment, but the environment may resist appropriation. When this resistance is overcome and some goal is attained, we speak of success; when it proves too strong so that the individual gives up the attempt and retreats, we describe this as failure. In the first case the personality is enriched through the learning that accompanies conquest of obstacles, in the latter the individual is poorer, as every such experience tends to make him timorous and uncertain in his relations with his world. If failure multiplies he can only retreat into his shell and protect himself as best he may against the arrows of circumstance.

Apart from pathological extremes, no person, of course, is or could afford to be dominant in all situations, and likewise even the most retiring person reaches a point beyond which he can retreat no further. The proverb of the turning worm is a popular recognition of this, just as "pride goes before a fall" embodies our wish in respect of the too successful. But the great majority of folk lie midway on this scale, and notwithstanding the great difficulty of scientifically measuring such traits, one yet recognizes that persons generally have a bent of character and personality which permits them to be aligned either towards the side of self-assertion or self-negation. How far such tendencies are inborn or have their source in training is a moot question in many scientific as well as popular circles. But this to our mind is not the important issue. What really matters is not the origin but the outcome of such traits; the latter one knows can in some measure be controlled through training, but as to either the facts or control of origins relatively little is known that can be generally applied. How these tendencies towards self-assertion or self-negation come to fruition in the life-history of the individual, and what are the values of success and failure for mental health, are the questions to which we now turn.

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* McDougall, *Social Psychology*, p. 53.

The Essence of Success and Failure.

Before we discuss these points, it will be helpful to be clear as to what success and failure are *not*. There is a popular gospel, embodied in such quips as "Nothing succeeds like success," which sets a premium on external rewards, recognition, and eminence in public esteem as the hall-marks of success. Success as we use it is a psychological concept, an attitude consciously experienced, rather than some visible reward or advantage overtly possessed. The latter, of course, may be added, but the essence of success is inherent in the doing and is not something tacked on from without. It is thus in sharp contrast to those forms of extraneous control which we have discussed. Perhaps the simplest definition in terms of our discussion of motivation is that success is the *satisfaction of impulses in ends*. This implies the ability to realize goals; but more than this, the goal must be satisfying, some deep-seated desire of the individual must be met in its realization and met in a socially acceptable manner.

Success, too, should take us a step beyond the end which is immediately realized. It should be preparatory for new and larger ends to be attained; that is, each goal as it is realized should become a fresh point of departure towards further achievement. Only in this way can the hierarchy of ends which we described, the steady integration of personality through purposive activity, be achieved. Viewed as experience rather than as achievement, success becomes this habit of the progressive realization of goals.

Conversely, failure means falling short of the goal which we have set ourselves. When by reason of lack of persistence, too great obstacles, or ends which are really beyond our power, we are defeated in realizing a purpose, we call the experience failure. Just as satisfaction is the characteristic self-feeling accompaniment of success, so frustration attends failure. And as success is significant, not only in terms of the immediate end, but largely as prophetic of further progress, so failure when cumulative spells disaster in so far as it checks action by making the individual distrustful of his powers, and hesitant about essaying any new venture.

The Significance of Success and Failure.

What part then do success and failure, defined in these terms, play in the developing life of the child? In discussing rewards and punishments we pointed out some of the dangers of making action depend largely on outside influences, on what is introduced into a situation in more or less arbitrary fashion. Success and failure, however, regarded as the consequences of action, viewed from the aspect of inner experience, represent a different sort of motivation. The satisfaction resulting from success is not dependent on anything outside the act itself, it is an integral part of the self in action and as such is unaffected by outside happenings. Social approval and disapproval do, it is true, tend to attach themselves to acts which wear the outward imprint of success, and there is always the danger that we will learn to judge our performances, not by the intrinsic satisfactions or dissatisfactions which they arouse, but by the praise or condemnation which they awaken in others. We then try to "get by" in our conduct, in other words, to realize on a situation which is spurious from our own point of view even though it deceives those who view it from outside. Similarly, even if our acts are condemned by others, our own judgment may confirm the rightness of what we have done, and it is important that our sense of success shall here hold firm. The difficulty of arming the individual against outside judgment can be met only by training the child to recognize the authentic marks of value in his own performance.

Situations Yielding Satisfaction.

What are the situations in which the individual should normally experience the satisfaction of success? Reverting to the classification of levels of action, we may discuss success in relation to the satisfaction of the appetites, of social adjustment, and of the purposive levels of action.

Success and the Appetites: One of the most important implications of success is in connection with the young child's daily routine. Parents obscure the issue in eating, sleeping, dressing, eliminative habits when they introduce praise and blame, rewards and punishments in such situations. These activities in themselves are normally not unpleasant, and the satisfaction of the appetite should itself be sufficient motivation for the child. If he does not experience this normal satisfaction then the remedy lies not in the addition of extraneous controls but in a revision of the routine itself to discover where it is at fault. The case history at the end of this chapter illustrates this point, and similarly many cases of eating and sleeping difficulties, enuresis, etc., have cleared up when external controls have been removed and the child allowed to experience without interference the consequences of his own actions.

In the table of occasions which parents found to necessitate control * it is true that there is a high incidence of difficulty in relation to routine situations, but this may mean that the routine has not been well planned, or that injudicious methods have been resorted to in the attempt to enforce it.

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* *Supra.*, pp. 82-3.

There is also the probability that parents are more on the alert to record this type of occasion because of its being a frequent topic of discussion in groups. In the nursery school even resistance which is the carry-over from a home situation of long standing, for example, with the afternoon nap, the eating of certain foods, etc., clears up quickly when the child comes to realize what is expected of him and what *he* may expect.

Mothers frequently report difficulties with a child whose urge to independence outruns his motor development, for example, the child who is determined to feed himself although he spills most of his food. The child's satisfaction in doing something for himself is more important than the food which he wastes or misses.

The present generation of parents have largely emancipated themselves from the older theological prejudices against the bodily appetites as carnal and tainted with sin. Sex is the last of the appetites to be elevated to a position of respect and dignity, but this transformation is only now in progress. It lies outside the scope of our subject to discuss adult attitudes, except as they impinge on the experience of children, but one might note in passing that a healthy enjoyment of the appetites is one condition of a wholesome, satisfying life both for child and adult.

Success and Social Adjustments: To meet people frankly and pleasantly, to be at ease in the company of one's fellows, is an important phase of successful adjustment. The person in whom this is marked always stands out in favorable contrast to the one who falls frequently into an unwitting *faux pas* or whose crudeness is positively painful. We have already discussed how the early experience of children with one another may condition them to social success. There is, however, another aspect of social adjustment to consider in addition to the conditionings of early experience. Social poise may be the reflection not so much of early social experience as of the whole state of adjustment of the individual. It may reflect confidence in his ability to deal with a situation, trust in the good will of others, and also a sense of at-oneness with himself. Its lack may be the expression of inner uncertainties, doubts, and conflicts. Again, social *bonhomie* may be a form of compensation; the person who is feeling his inadequacy in other forms of achievement, may console himself, consciously or unconsciously, with the reflection that he is valued by a wide circle of friends or that he is able to be hale fellow well met with all his acquaintances.

Purposive Action.

We have already discussed the conditions of success in relation to the more complex phases of activity described under the realizing of goals. We have also touched on the significance for the development of personality of ability to realize ourselves through action. But the development of personality through successful enterprise has implications beyond this narrower range of the individual's own experience; it becomes the basis of leadership, and thereby combines the power of personal achievement with the privilege of affording the most powerful type of social motivation to others. What then are the qualities to be cultivated which make for successful leadership?

How Leaders Are Made.

Three main qualities for leadership may be mentioned: initiative, which involves willingness to take a chance; decision, which implies ability to discriminate among alternatives; and lastly, willingness to accept consequences.

Initiative: Woodworth comments on the qualities which make up initiative: *

> " 'Initiative'—that high-grade trait that is so much in demand —seems to be partly a matter of imagination and partly of will. It demands inventiveness in seeing what can be done, zest for action, and an independent and masterful spirit."

Initiative thus means going out against circumstance to bend it to our purposes. Instead of waiting to see what the day may bring forth, or until every one is registering yes to some proposal, we set out to make things happen. Taking the offensive is a more arduous business than a policy of watchful waiting, but when combined with judgment it will prove more rewarding. It appeals to a love of adventure, of testing the unknown. How far the willingness to experiment with new ways is an inherent trait, or how far it is engendered by the successful outcome of early experiences we do not know. It is apparent, however, that people react very differently to difficulty. With some, opposition is the signal for retreat, with others it merely calls forth a fresh offensive. An important ingredient of personality is the attitude which we develop to difficulty. Do we give up, do we explode in anger, or do we keep doggedly on till the situation is mastered? *Perseverance* in the face of odds is as necessary an ingredient of success as is willingness to make the venture.

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* *Psychology*, p. 278.

Power to Make Decisions: The need for decision arises when we reach what Dewey calls a "forked-road situation,"* that is, where we must choose between alternative courses of action. Experience passes from the level of sensation and feeling to that of reflective thought when such an impasse in action is reached. The thinking process in such a situation consists in an imaginative projection of ourselves along the alternative roads. Thus, the small child may be confronted with the alternatives of taking a candy by stealth or doing without it because he has been forbidden to touch it. At the lower, impulsive level of action, the chances are that he takes the candy before he thinks, and then when confronted with the fact, either denies that he had done this or invents a plausible excuse for his act. In other words, the thinking which should have preceded the act in order to have decision now comes afterwards to patch up the consequences of non-reflective action. Adults not infrequently follow this same course of acting first and rationalizing afterwards. But if the child has reached the level of deliberative thought he will try to see what will be the consequences, first, if he takes the candy, also if he refrains. If he is sufficiently mature to make action wait on deliberation, he will frame his choice on the basis of the forecast which he is able from earlier experience to make of the two possible outcomes. But this demands a high degree of restraint which often adults fail to manifest. We should not expect more of the child than his level of experience will permit, but we may at least encourage and commend the child's delaying his naturally impulsive actions in order to give decision a chance to grow.

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* Dewey, John, *How We Think,* p. 11.

When the projected consequences of two or more alternative courses of action have been followed to their probable outcome, choice may have already determined itself. That is, the prevailing principle of selection in experience will tend to set out one alternative in a position of preferment so that the person has no doubt of what he wishes to do. He therefore identifies himself with this course of action, and others cease to appeal or compete. We have already seen how this final step in decision works, the person becoming "warm" to one part of experience, adopting it as a part of himself, whilst to rival portions he becomes correspondingly "cold" and they fade from the picture.

But choice does not always resolve itself so easily. Where alternatives remain equally desirable it may be necessary to make an arbitrary decision, typified in the tossing of a coin, in order to escape the deadlock. The main point is to achieve action in the sense of decision, for a state of vacillation is acutely unpleasant or if allowed to become habitual is utterly debilitating.

Again, we may resolve the conflict that is inherent in all choice situations by a deliberate suppression of one alternative even though it appeals strongly to us. This may be done on the ground of some more distant goal to be served, but unless this end is clear and sufficiently sustaining suppression is apt to be the least satisfactory way of resolving conflict. The reason is that the suppressed desire is likely to reassert itself in a form less easy to recognize and deal with. In our opinion, however, children are less apt to suffer the nemesis of suppressed desires than older persons as in their case attempts at suppression do not drive motives underground, but rather provoke an emotional outbreak.

Snap judgments are another unsatisfactory way of resolving difficulties, as they so often prove wrong and have to be reversed. To wait till all the facts are in and then to weigh them carefully before arriving at a conclusion is the very essence of successful decision.

Lastly, one can often escape from a dilemma through the discovery that there is a third alternative which satisfies the demands of both situations without the disadvantages attaching to either. This is a particularly useful method to follow with children. It calls for inventiveness on the adult's part, but it minimizes conflict and allows action to proceed without hindrance and encourages the child to reflect for himself. For example, a child wants to go to the movie on Saturday afternoon; the mother is equally resolved that she shall not be allowed to go. Merely to suppress the child's desire for something to do, without offering an appropriate substitute would be a poor adjustment for both persons. To suggest a hike in the country, provided this appealed to the child, would be to effect a useful compromise between the child's desires and the parent's sense of responsibility.

Accepting Responsibility for Consequences.

Having made decisions we must be ready to abide by them. This means that parents should be consistent in enforcing the demands that they make as well as scrupulous in meeting demands that are made on them. With this, of course, goes the necessity of seeing that their demands are sufficiently reasonable to be capable of consistent enforcement. Secondly, it is unwise to interfere to protect children from the consequences of their acts unless those consequences are likely to prove dangerous to health or limb. Yet often a sentimental attitude on the part of parents relieves children of responsibility. "Poor little fellow, we will let him off this time," is the cry. The parent indulges her own feelings with no reckoning of the moral effect on the child.

Where the child has freely chosen to work for a certain end he should be held responsible for his choice. If he decides to spend his allowance for candy, well and good; but then he must not be given the money for a ball after the candy has been eaten. He has made his choice and must abide by it. It is here that parents do legitimately enter the picture to see that the child is not allowed to evade consequences because they happen to be distasteful. If he has made a wrong choice the child will learn this by having to abide by it. He will learn more than that he has been wrong in that particular case; he will find out something about causal connections in our actions in general. There is nothing arbitrary in the parent's action in enforcing consequences in this fashion. To step in and relieve the child of the penalty of his choice would here be the arbitrary and culpable procedure.

Responsibility involves completing a task which has been begun. The child must do not merely what he *likes* to do, he must develop a sense of obligation in respect of commitments that he makes. He must do what is required or agreed to in terms of the goal which he has chosen. Children in a nursery school soon learn to curb their demands in terms of their willingness to abide by agreement. If, for example, they demand a toy in use by others and accept the teacher's assignment of a turn to be taken shortly, then the child must not renege when his turn comes in lieu of some new-found interest. But equally it should be recognized that there is no value in doing things just because we do *not* like them. Parents sometimes seem to feel that experience has disciplinary value in proportion as it is disagreeable. Our point is rather that the child develops the capacity for sustained attention and persistent effort by working on those things which are intrinsically interesting, rather than by being required to perform meaningless or distasteful tasks. But once having accepted an end, the drudgery which is involved should be accepted as part of the whole, and carried through unwaveringly and if possible with cheerfulness. It is surprising how much steady toil even young children will tolerate when they are genuinely keen about the thing which they are doing. When children are aimless, distractable, lacking in capacity for sustained effort, the remedy usually lies first in finding what the child really cares about and giving him the opportunity to work on that thing, and, secondly, in finding whether the type of adult control is not at fault.

Promptness is another phase of accepting responsibility. As social life increases in complexity *time* becomes more and more important, and as Professor Judd points out,* the synchronization of the activities of different people is indispensable to smooth living. The time sense develops slowly in children, but it can be stimulated by a regular schedule in the home and by a nicety on the part of adults both in keeping engagements and in exacting promptness from children. The habit of punctuality will contribute to efficiency as well as being a significant courtesy in our relations with others.

All this may seem a digression from our original topic of success and failure, but a little consideration of the scheme of self-directing activity which we have been outlining will show that success means just this ability to carry through a project, while failure is the inability to realize our goals. With such a scheme of natural motivation and natural consequences in mind let us turn again directly to success and failure in order to ask what part they play in the development of the child. How does the ability to realize an objective which he has set for himself react on the general attitude of the child, and what prophecy does it carry for his future development?

The Tonic Effects of Success.

It goes without saying that we all like to succeed—whether it be the child making a mud pie or the housewife baking a cake, to carry through a plan to a satisfactory conclusion is a pleasant experience. It is an invigorating experience as well, and predisposes us to fresh effort. Indeed, with the child whose self is in the making, concrete successes however small in themselves have a cumulative effect in the building up of personality. We are inclined therefore to accept that what the child ultimately becomes may be largely influenced by his *early* successes or failures. Thus if the child's first halting approach to a new object or situation issues favorably he gains confidence in his own powers. He comes to believe that he can do things, and that belief stimulates him to further efforts. Confidence is a large ingredient in the success of the new undertaking. In this way the child's conception of himself and of his powers carries into his future actions.

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* Judd, C. H., *The Psychology of Social Institutions,* Chapter VI, New York, The Macmillan Co., 1927.

Burnham * has pointed out how critical for the child is his approach to a new situation, such as entering school, and how much a good early adjustment may contribute to the child's success throughout his school course. In thus speaking of success it should be remembered that we are not meaning by that term either success in the sense of formal academic attainments, or success in the sense of popular approval. These may be contributing factors, but the essential meaning of success must always be in the psychological sense discussed above, satisfaction in an act performed, especially since that act fits into a general tendency or pattern in the life of the individual.

If success is conceived in this intrinsic sense, and not in the spurious sense of extrinsic rewards, then the dangers popularly believed to attend a successful career are minimized. If we rely on satisfaction in activity that satisfaction is its own protection; unless our work meets the demands of the situation we will not find satisfaction in it. On the other hand, if success is measured in terms of the approval of others, or in tangible recognitions of attainment instead of on our own power of self-criticism, we will become more and more dependent on the applause of the gallery with its artificial and fickle forms of stimulation. The smart-Aleck tendency may be too easily encouraged by the latter. But if the smart-Aleck is ignored instead of being always rewarded by a laugh, his satisfaction in this superficial and objectionable type of behavior will soon pall, and his intelligence will be turned into channels that make for more genuine success.

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* Burnham, William H., *The Normal Mind*, p. 451.

The ability to estimate one's own accomplishments varies greatly. We do not expect in the young child a high degree of insight. If he has made something that satisfies his own need, that is enough, no matter how crude the product be. He brings us a drawing which he says is a house, and though it bears no discoverable relation to a house by adult standards we agree with him and he is satisfied. But as he grows older, he becomes harder and harder to satisfy. The adult reaches the point when he despairs of matching his image with reality, and is content merely to recognize that he has tried up to the limit of his powers. It is for this reason that we should set the stage with the child to make *early* success possible, not that he should get the habit of saying, "What a big boy am I!", but rather that he should form the habit of working to the limit of his powers.

It is good mental hygiene to be living to the full of our capacity. This does not mean that we are using up our resources but rather that we are increasing them. Parents often have the idea that children should be withheld from effort, that physical or mental exertion is bad for them. It is not the use of our powers so much as the frustrating of them which causes worry and mental disturbance, and likewise over-activity is a sign of poor balance in the child's interests or in his bodily process. In children as in adults whatever encourages a readiness to effort in which they find genuine pleasure and satisfaction should be a means of growth. With many adults strain and worry is the result, not of a too free use of their powers, but of arrested development. The bodily economy compensates readily for work; what it cannot compensate for is a divided mind which prevents the individual from throwing himself wholeheartedly into a chosen line of endeavor.

The Significance of Failure.

It is easy to see that if early success is stimulating, early failure may have disastrous effects in checking the first experimental activities of the child, and turning back those energies which should have found an outlet in relation to the child's environment. Such failure may be purely accidental, nevertheless it may have a lasting effect in turning back the child's activity into himself. Instead of expressing himself freely and readily through the relations which he forms with his surroundings he begins instead to live out his ambitions, not in real situations but in dreams and make-believes. He compensates for the lack of a conspicuous outward success by imaging himself able to override all obstacles. Thus the child who has been discouraged in his early overtures of friendship to other children, if he is sensitive to rebuffs, may withdraw from further social experimentation and compensate for his failure by an imaginary world in which he is admired and sought by all. It may well be that the distinction between introverted and extraverted types, a distinction somewhat uncritically accepted and overworked in psychology to-day, can be of some service, not as representing distinctions of hereditary types, but as descriptive concepts which indicate the direction in which early experience has modified the reactions of the individual through initial success or failure. On this basis one would reverse the customary order of cause and effect; the self-negative, reclusive type being viewed as the product of early failures, rather than the early failure as the result of the type. It is well, however, to be sparing of such labels which easily become a factor affecting our attitudes to others but are rarely accurate or constructive in helping them.

On the positive side we should attempt to find some things in which every child can attain some measure of success. In schools where the emphasis is predominantly intellectual a premium is put on intelligence, the "bright" child succeeds, the child whose gifts lie in the social sphere, in esthetic expression or in manual skills may have little chance for distinction. Thus the child who succeeds gets an exaggerated sense of his own powers because they are being gauged by only one measure. The child who is at a disadvantage under these conditions suffers disproportionately; his real abilities do not have a chance to function. How deep the iron of failure according to standards in school can burn into the child's soul is perhaps hardly realized even by intelligent and sympathetic parents. The feelings of inferiority developed in such a setting cannot safely be ignored. In addition, if the child feels outshone by a more favorable record of another child in the same family jealousy is almost certain to embitter the relationship. It goes without saying that wise parents will refrain from disparaging comments in such a situation, but this is not enough. They must bestir themselves to find situations outside of school in which the child can succeed, in which he can hold the center of the stage while for the time being the other child fades into the background of the picture. And let us lend our thought as well to the difficult task which besets our public schools of so adjusting the procedures and methods there, that the individual hunger of all children for some taste of success can be more easily met and that better attitudes to work in school and out can result.

Is this then to imply that a child must never fail, that the scales are to be weighted in the interests of persistent success? Nothing could be more disastrous. All that we ask is that the first fumbling attempts of the young child towards mastery of his environment, usually construed in terms of acquiring motor skills, learning to stand, to walk, to fetch and to carry,—that this beginning of the learning process should be implemented by the parent in such a way that the child should not be discouraged but encouraged in his attempts. Most of us have witnessed at some time or other the thrilled delight of the young child who discovers that he can do something new. Children who have been slow in walking may suddenly succeed and then they fairly run about, seeming to be quite tireless in the practice of their new skill. Any one who has watched such a proceeding must realize that it means far more to the child than the mere satisfaction that he experiences in the act of locomotion. It is the sense of power, of being able to control his environment in a new way which he finds so exhilarating. It is this kind of early success which we covet for the child. A similar happy experience in making social adjustments may also have a uniquely favorable influence on later social encounters. A habit of overcoming hesitations, of meeting people easily and naturally, is an asset of the greatest value.

Against such a habit failure is relatively harmless. That is, if the child has learned to run well a tumble will not put him off running; if he has good social habits a rebuff in one quarter will not turn him into a misanthrope. To break a leaf from an oak has no significant effect but to break the leaf from a sprouting acorn is a different matter. It is the first experiences, because they are first, and because the child has no other experiences against which to measure them which can play so decisive a part in predisposing the child to success or to failure.

Dealing with Difficulty.

Overconfidence, indeed, needs the antidote of occasional failure. Such failure should not be postponed to adulthood. The adult whose path has always been easy, who has never had difficulties and disappointments to reckon with, is apt to take the falls which he is bound to meet in the course of his life much harder than the person who has had to encounter the like to some degree in childhood and youth. Possibly this is one reason why many men who attain eminence in later life are those who had to contend with early difficulties. They have early formed the habit of dealing with difficulty, and whatever the outcome in actual results, they are able to measure their attainments in terms of their own attitude and attack upon it. It is, however, the power of self-criticism and self-knowledge which only experience can engender which makes it possible to use failure in a constructive fashion. The young need the stimulus of success, but increasing maturity should involve the ability to profit by our failures as well as by our successes.

The situations in which we fail, if we have the patience to unravel them in order to discover why we failed, may be unusually instructive. This, of course, we cannot expect the young child to do for himself; we may have merely to encourage him to try again, and to see that he has the help needed to tide him over the rough place. But with a somewhat older child it should be possible to help him to understand his disappointments and blunders, not by way of reproach, but merely to help to avoid a like failure in the future. The lesson of success is easy to read, and few of us will mistake it; the lesson of failure is far from obvious. It is generally beclouded by the emotional aspects of the situation which make it hard for us to take an impartial view of what has really happened. But a constructive attempt to think through a situation will dispel the emotional fog, and if such an attempt is sincerely made the ultimate value of failure as a learning situation may be even greater than that of success. That is to say, failure need not be cast aside like a fabric that has been spoiled in the making; it can be integrated into the life of the individual, and can correct and regulate his general tendency towards success.

Failure as a Part of Learning.

There is, however, another sense in which failure is as integral a part of the learning process as is success itself. A new situation is seldom mastered in the first trial—it usually calls for repeated attacks before the relations involved are mastered or the new habit set up. Thus in puzzle-solving, or in maze-learning, to take two of the conventional learning situations of the psychological laboratory, one tries again and again before the solution of the problem is found. But these repeated unsuccessful trials are by no means waste effort, rather they are the *preliminary steps which make success possible.* They are the part of learning which is not perpetuated but they are as essential and as much a part of the total situation as is the final issue. The sheets that I throw into the waste-paper basket are destroyed, but they have all contributed something towards the final essay. Mistakes must be eliminated, but the process of eliminating them is part of the experience of achievement.

This puts success and failure in a somewhat different light. Failure is seen not in antithesis to success, but rather as an incomplete or partial stage in a process of learning. And success, or the final achievement of a goal, becomes not an isolated accident but the final outcome of a long series of approximations. In this sense a constructive use of failure is the foundation of success. And success reached by such a process has nothing fortuitous about it; instead of being a happy accident of favoring conditions it is a product woven into the very fabric of personality through countless forward efforts and unravelings.

A Constructive Use of Failure.

It is on this note of life as a learning process in which both success and failure play their part that we wish to close. Learning may well be the keynote of all our thinking about the management of children. If we conceive of the child as one who has everything to learn we will be patient with his fumbling efforts and sympathetic towards his achievements. We will try to supply the conditions which are most favorable for learning, and then we will allow the child to reap the harvest of his own efforts. We will try to interpret situations not in terms of our own pride in the child or the humiliation which his acts may bring but rather in terms of what each situation in turn can be made to yield for the child's development.

The learning attitude may even have some comfort for us as parents. All of us realize our early mistakes, our failures to do—or to leave undone—what we might for our children. We sometimes think and feel as if such failures were irrevocable—as if children were made or marred for all time by the things we in our ignorance have done. A constructive view of failure should save us from such despairing sentimentality. The human organism has tremendous recuperative powers; children often turn out well despite all their parents do to them. But the outlook becomes still more hopeful when we realize that we can turn our failures to good account, seeing them as part of our own process of learning to be better parents.

OUTLINE XII

SUCCESS AND FAILURE

I. The Nature of Success and Failure:
  - Motor Attitudes—approach and withdrawal,
  - Self-tendencies—self-assertion and self-negation,
  - Satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

II. Situations Yielding Satisfaction:
  - The Appetites,
  - Social Adjustments,
  - Purposive Action.

III. Conditions of Successful Leadership:
  - Initiative,
  - Decision,
  - Responsibility—accepting consequences,
    - —carrying through,
    - —promptness.

IV. The Value of Success:
  - It builds up personality,
  - It stimulates to fresh efforts.

V. The Significance of Failure:
  - It may destroy initiative and engender feelings of inferiority,
  - It may also develop the habit of overcoming difficulties,
  - Failures may be used as stages towards success.

VI. Reference:
  - Burnham—*The Normal Mind,* Chapter XV.

VII. Questions:
  1. Can you recall any marked success as a child, and how it affected your attitudes?
  2. How have your children reacted to failure in their undertakings?

ILLUSTRATIONS XII

SUCCESS AND FAILURE

I. *Learning to Choose.*

"I have a child of eleven and if I let her choose what she would wear, she would wear her good clothes to school. In that case, what should I do?"

"I let my child choose his clothes. I choose three or four suits and he picks out what he wants from among them."

"Children get a great deal of pleasure out of choosing their own clothes. My child chose gingham for a dress, matched spools and stockings for it also. She has always enjoyed that dress particularly because she helped buy it."

Question: What are the differences in these three cases?

"I think that every child should be allowed freedom to choose for himself when he grows up. He must grow up in his father's and mother's church and influence can be brought to bear upon him so that he will always want to stay in the same church."

Question: Is this permitting the child to choose?

II. *Obscuring Natural Consequences.*

"I have found that criticism is sometimes effective with children. I have in mind one case of a child in school who had always been accustomed to a great deal of attention and comment, having been the center of the family circle at home. He seemed rather surprised to think that he was considered anything but the very best. Too much praise had always been given."

"I know of a case where a consistent effort was made to compensate for a child's dullness. In childhood this boy was duller than the other members of the family. He was, however, encouraged along the lines of the things he could do; the other things were ignored. When he grew up he assumed that he could do everything and he tried various things in which he failed. Just now, he seems to be fumbling around, hunting for something in a confused, unhappy sort of way. Ignoring the things he could not do, merely served to make him think he could do everything."

"I recall a child of three whom I used to watch daily. He could do nothing without an audience and "See me do it" was his constant refrain. Unless he got some hard knocks that would check his overwhelming conceit, he would certainly grow up to be a most objectionable person."

III. *Some Undesirable Effects of Success and Failure.*

"What about the fear of failure? I have a child of six in whom this is very strong. She hesitates, for instance, to count up to twenty for fear she can't do it. I've seen her do the same thing in kindergarten. It is rather a general characteristic. She is timid about everything. On the other hand she does love approbation. She will come home with a story of how the teacher had told her she had on the prettiest dress in the class. When I talk it over carefully, she admits that the teacher didn't really say that but, 'that was what she thought.' "

"Sometimes success isn't such a good thing. One of my children won four prizes in one term. The result was that she stopped working and just rested on her laurels. At the next examination, she failed. It has taken her about four years to get over the effects of her success."

CASE XII

Jean. Age 3/3 I.Q. 112.

Problem as stated by mother.

"Child refuses to have an evacuation without the use of a syringe."

History.

Family Life:
  Father: Age 32—salesman.
  Mother: Age 30—clerk before marriage.
  Siblings: None.
  Other Persons in Home: None.
  Home: Five-room apartment—veranda—no garden—separate room for child.
Obstetrical History: Nothing unusual.
Developmental History: Nothing unusual.
Attitudes: Very fond of potatoes.
Motor: Early.
Speech: Early.
Eating: No difficulty—child eats a moderate amount and almost everything that is offered.
* Elimination:
  Bladder—no enuresis.
  Bowel—Mother was advised to use a suppository to train the child to evacuate at a regular time at two weeks of age—she persisted in its use till the past six months—the suppository was not efficacious and she began using a syringe—the child now asks for the syringe every morning—child's diet includes adequate roughage and bulk.
Sleeping: Regular hours—still sleeps in afternoon.
Play: Plays with child her own age.
Sex: No difficulty.
Emotions: Fears—None.
  Anger—occasional temper outbreak—not serious.
Self-tendencies: Happy, contented child—rather taciturn.
Discipline: No corporal punishment—regular hours—no parental disagreement.

Diagnosis.

This child has never learned to control the function of evacuation. A mechanical stimulus has been applied since birth. There was only occasional soiling other than the morning evacuation and the mother and child were quite happy to carry on the arrangement until it became, apparently, a nuisance to the mother and a detriment to the child's development.

Recommendation.

Place the child on the chamber on awaking and then every hour until an evacuation occurs. After this do not place her on the chamber again until the next morning. Disregard the child's crying or rebellion at being disturbed at play. Make no comments other than to intimate that if she did evacuate, she would not be disturbed again that day. Do not be alarmed if she goes a day or two without evacuation.

Record.

0 = No Evacuation. + = Evacuation. S = Soiling.

						Times					
				A.M.				P.M.			
	Waking	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6
Feb. 3 ..	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Feb. 4 ..	0	0	0 S	0							
Feb. 5 ..	0	0	+								
Feb. 6 ..	0	0	0	0	0	0 S	0				
Feb. 7 ..	0	0	0	+	0	0					
Feb. 8 ..	0										
Feb. 9 ..	0	+									
Feb. 10 .	0	+									
Feb. 11 .	+										
Feb. 12 .	0	0	+								
Feb. 13 .	+										
Feb. 14 .	+										
Feb. 15 .	+										
Feb. 16 .	0	+									
Feb. 17 .	+										
Feb. 18 .	+										
Feb. 19 .	+										

After two months the record was still continuing in this satisfactory manner.

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